

THE Atlantic

DECEMBER 2004

WILL IRAN BE NEXT?

IRAN WANTS NUKES.
A PENTAGON-STYLE
WAR GAME SHOWS
WHY MILITARY STRIKES
WOULD INVITE DISASTER
BY JAMES FALLOWS

AMONG THE HOSTAGE- TAKERS

THE IRANIAN STUDENTS
TWENTY-FIVE YEARS LATER
BY MARK BOWDEN

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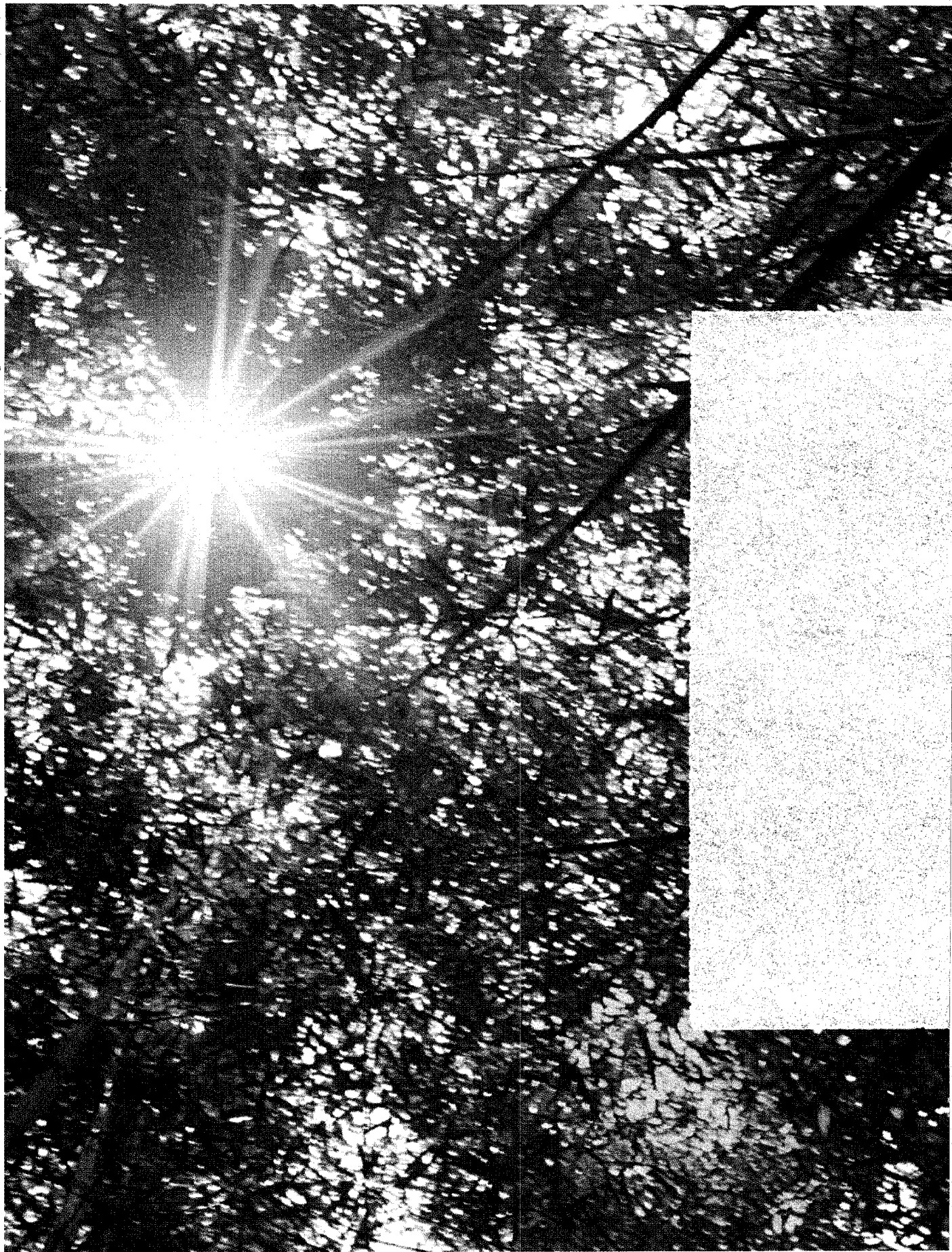
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*American hostage William Belk at the
U.S. embassy in Tehran, November 7, 1979*

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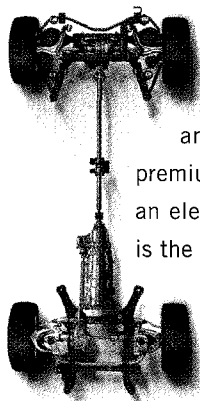
FOUR IS GREATER THAN TWO

has led to a better performing vehicle.

The appeal of having a 320-hp 4.6L Northstar V8 VVT driving *all four wheels* would seem obvious enough. It is generally acknowledged that all-wheel drive translates into all-weather, all-road capability.

But the new Cadillac STS is, first and foremost, a *performance* vehicle, and performance drivers are attached to the more traditional rear-wheel-drive configuration, for reasons more compelling than nostalgia. Having the front wheels steer while the rear wheels generate forward thrust produces perhaps the most thrilling aspect of performance driving—accelerating out of a corner, using the throttle to shape your exit line. How might one craft an all-wheel-drive system that would satisfy the performance driver?

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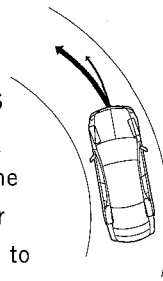
But during cornering, particularly during *aggressive* cornering, all

four wheels will seldom find exactly the same degree of traction, thus opening the door to wheel spin and the subsequent loss of power and control. We close that door with the STS chassis control

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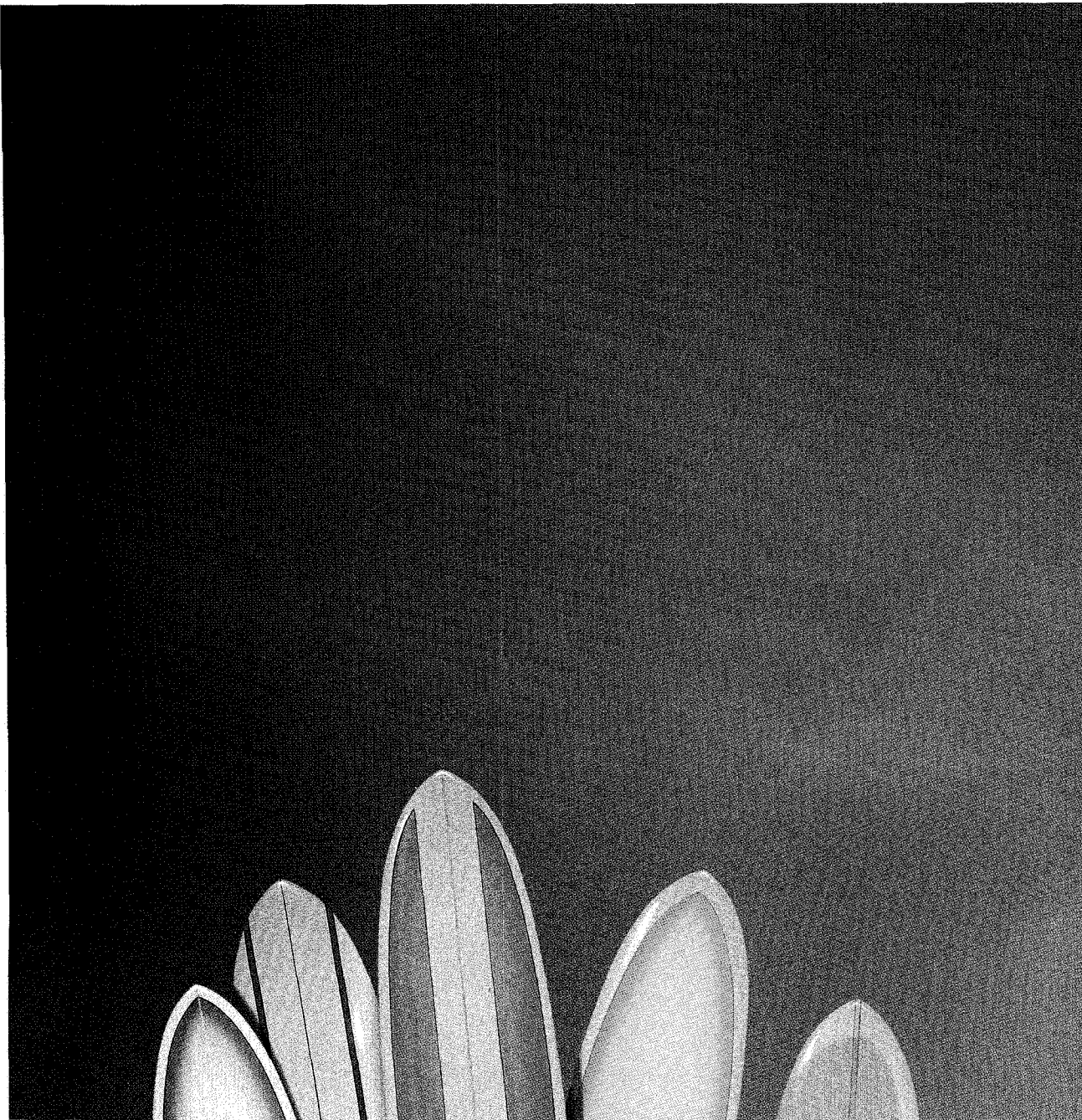
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double over the next two decades just to keep up. What you may not know is that ChevronTexaco is working with governments and partner companies to secure the largest

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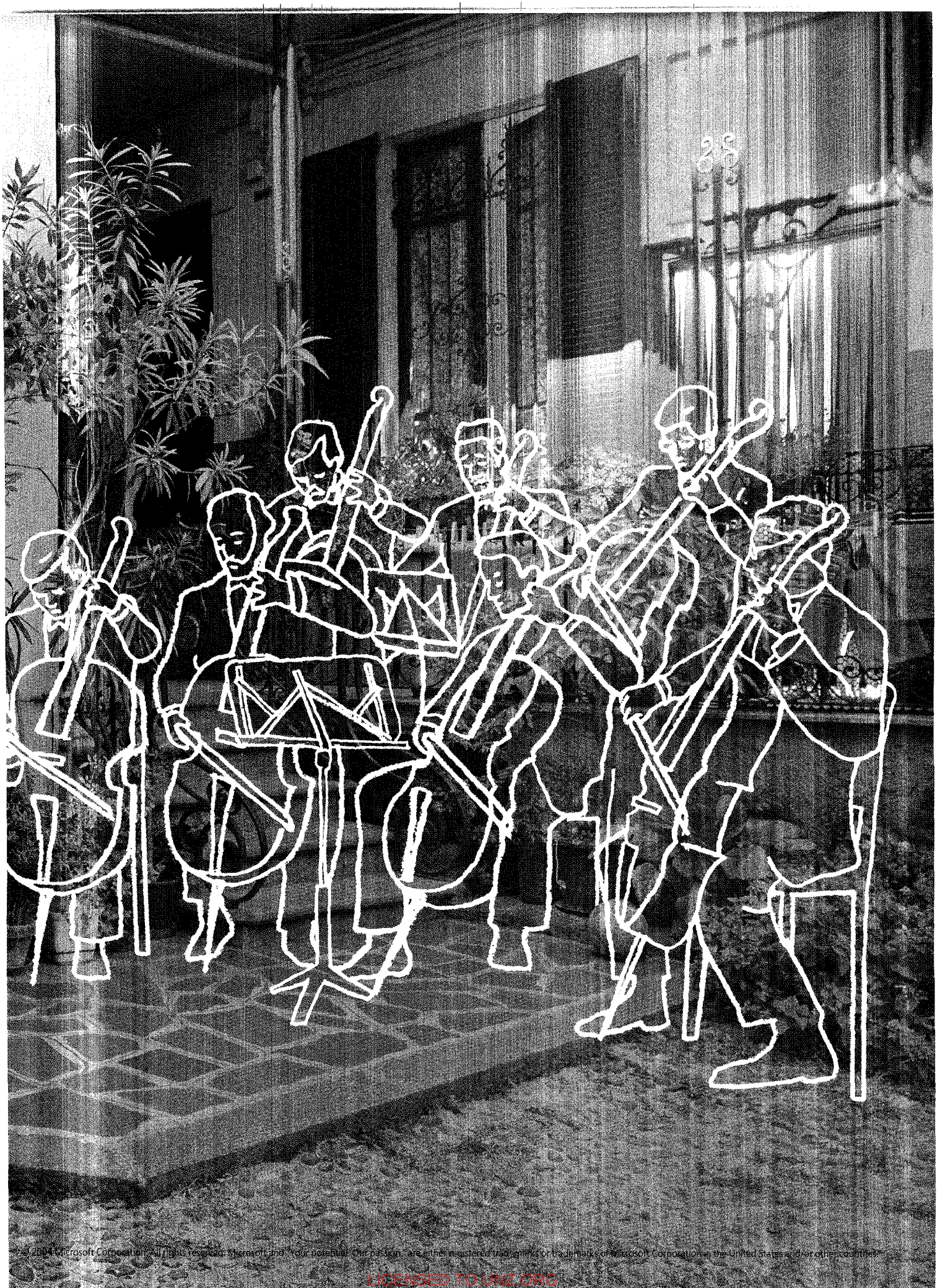
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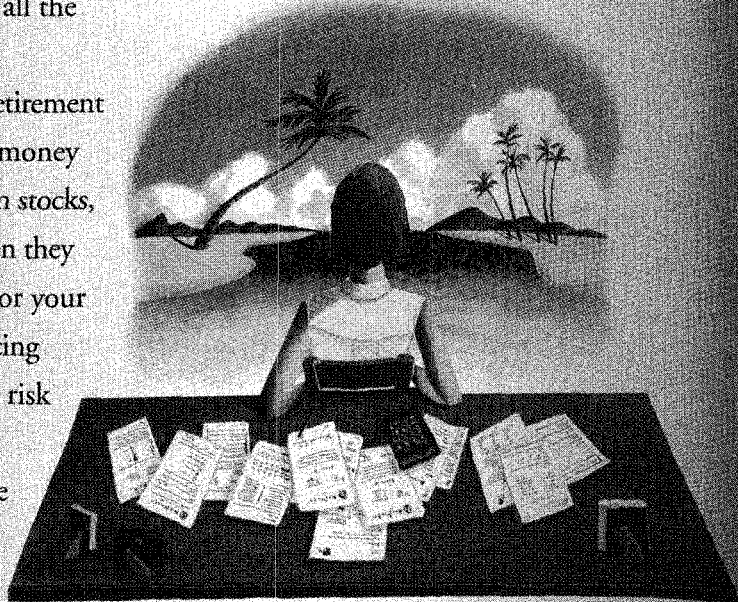
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Honda's comm

Honda has been a leader in the area of automotive safety research and design. And, as a part of our continuing safety efforts, we plan to lead the industry into the future. By the end of 2006, our commitment to "Safety for Everyone" will equip virtually every Honda and Acura model*, regardless of size or price, with the following safety features as standard equipment:

● **Front side airbags with Occupant Position Detection System (OPDS)** – Standard on 82% of our models by the end of 2004 and on 100% of our models by the end of 2006.

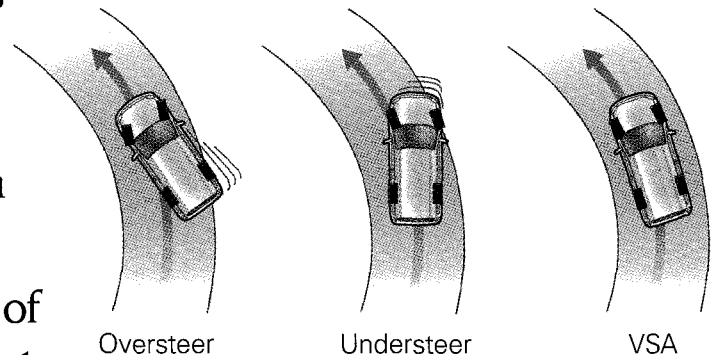
● **Side curtain airbags for every row** – By the end of 2004, will be



Side curtain airbags

standard on 64% of our product line and standard on 100% of our entire line by the end of '06.

● **Anti-lock braking system (ABS)** – Standard equipment on 88% of all our models by the end of 2004. 100% of our models will feature it as standard equipment by the end of '06.



● **Vehicle Stability Assist (VSA®) and rollover sensor** (for the side curtain airbag deployment) – Will be standard on 84% of all our light-duty trucks, including SUVs and minivans, by the end of 2004 and on 100% of our light-duty trucks by the end of 2006.

safety.honda.com

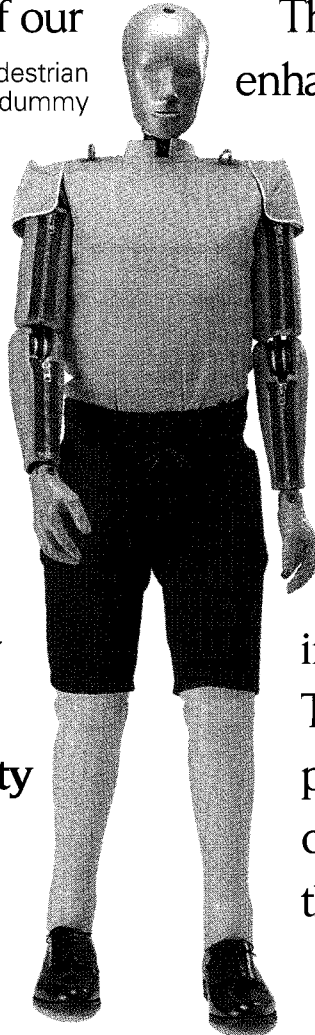
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itment to safety.

● **Pedestrian Safety** – In an effort to protect people outside of our cars, Honda will continue to pioneer the use of external features designed to help reduce pedestrian injuries. By the end of 2004, 96% of our entire product line will be equipped with pedestrian-protection features; 100% will have this equipment by the end of '06.

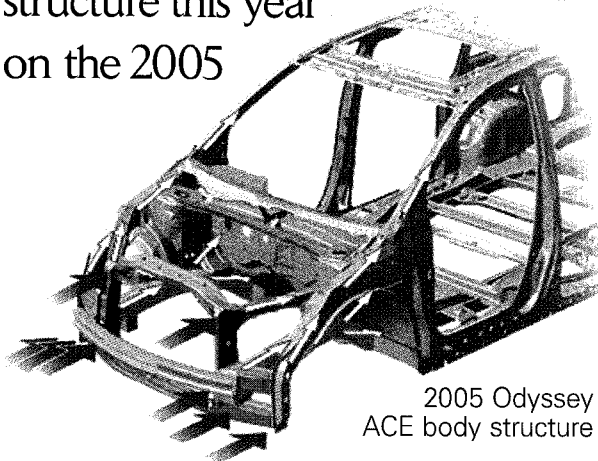
● **Advanced Compatibility Engineering™ (ACE™)** – Additionally, Honda will introduce the ACE body structure this year on the 2005

Honda pedestrian test dummy



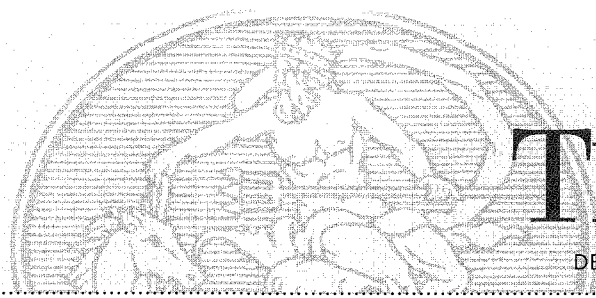
Honda Odyssey and Acura RL. The ACE design provides enhanced driver and passenger protection and also helps minimize damage to other vehicles in an accident. ACE will be standard on every Honda and Acura within the next seven years.

Honda has embarked upon an ambitious and innovative safety program. The goals and plans for this program extend well beyond our current technology and the year 2006. Because this endeavor is not simply a commitment to building safer vehicles, it's a commitment to "Safety for Everyone."



2005 Odyssey ACE body structure

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This month on the Web...

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Mark Bowden

The author of "Among the Hostage-Takers" talks about tracking down the perpetrators of the Iran hostage crisis, and how their lives have played out since 1979.

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The Iran Hostage Crisis

Links to footage of the hostages in captivity and of military preparations for a rescue mission.

INTERVIEW

Marilynne Robinson

The author of the acclaimed *Housekeeping* (1981) talks about *Gilead*, her first novel since then, which is reviewed in this issue.

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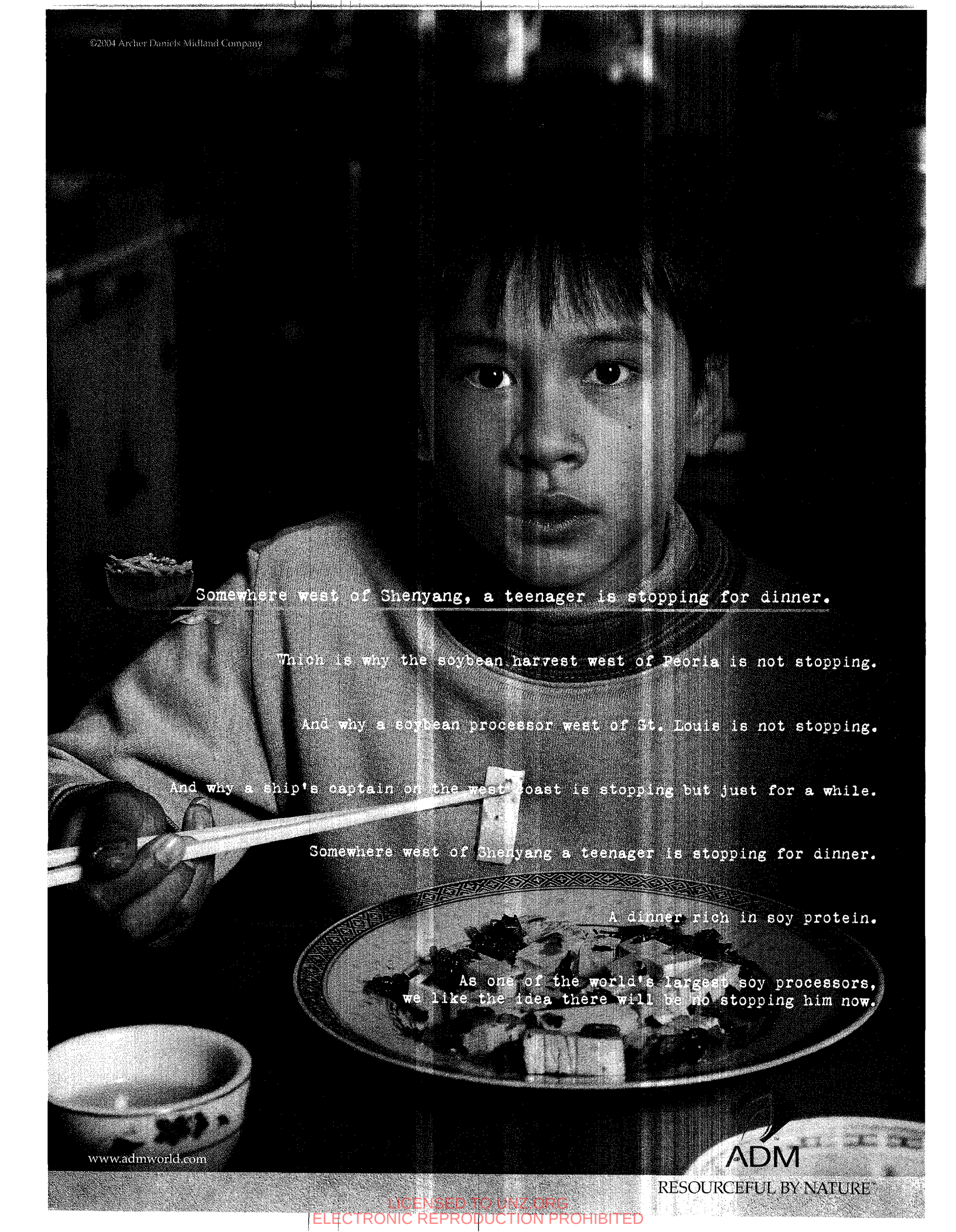
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Somewhere west of Shenyang, a teenager is stopping for dinner.

Which is why the soybean harvest west of Peoria is not stopping.

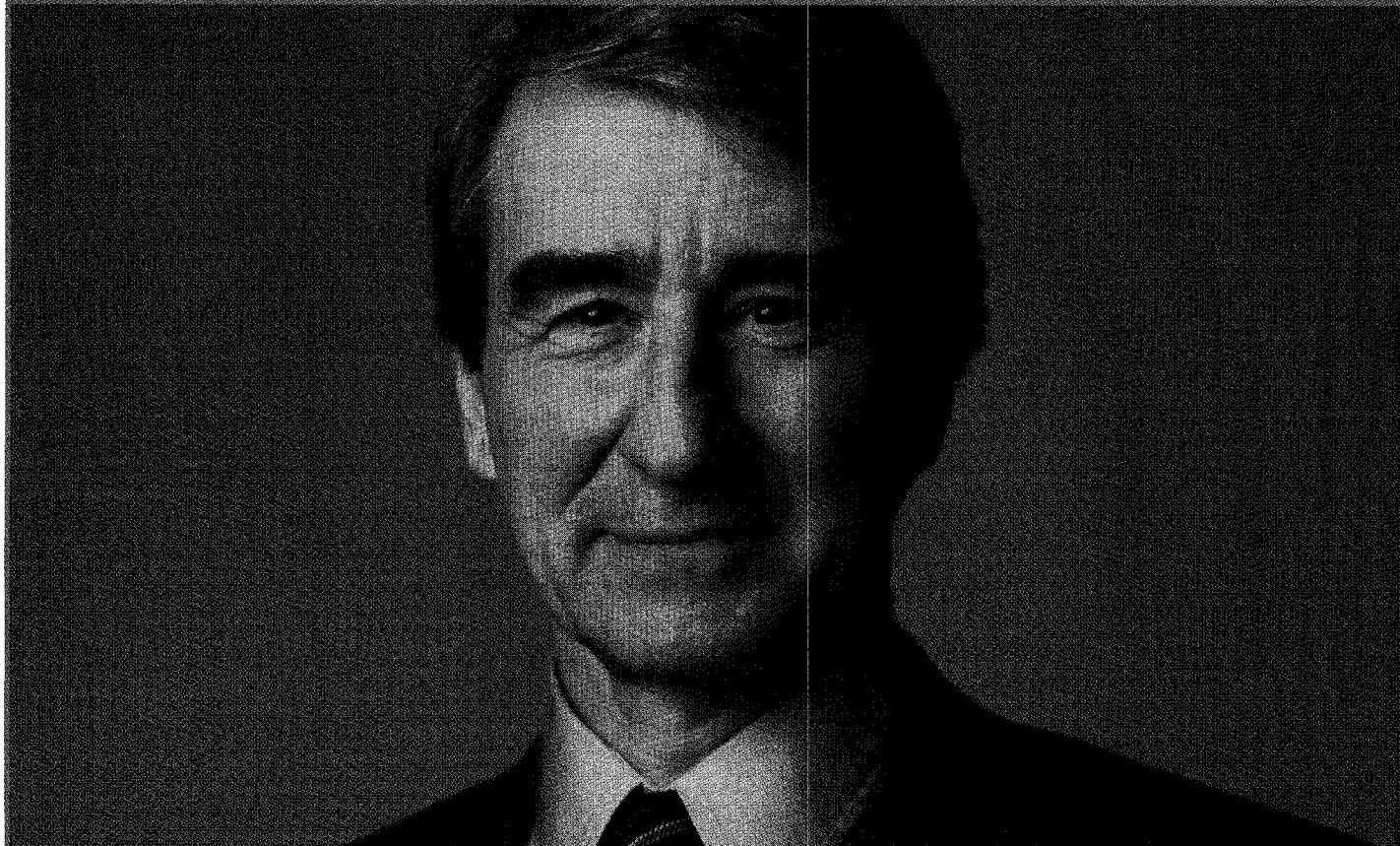
And why a soybean processor west of St. Louis is not stopping.

And why a ship's captain on the west coast is stopping but just for a while.

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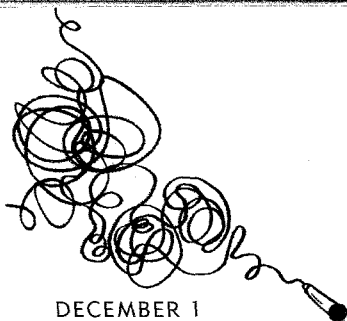
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DECEMBER 1

Brokaw's Final Broadcast

Tonight America's most trusted anchor (according to a 2003 *TV Guide* poll) presides over the *NBC Nightly News* for the last time. Executives at the network say they are not worried about the long-term impact on ratings, but a certain amount of nervousness may be in order: Brokaw's successor, Brian Williams, finished last in the *TV Guide* poll. Critics have faulted Williams for being, in their view, a florid speaker and "perpetually tanned."



DECEMBER 1 (Another) Report on UN Reform

A panel appointed last year by Secretary-General Kofi Annan submits its findings today on how the UN could better cope with global security threats. Although attempts to reform the UN have been perennial failures,

DECEMBER 31

Soviet-Era Subsidies End

Russian war veterans, pensioners, and invalids take their last free bus ride today: starting tomorrow free and subsidized services for these groups, which covered transportation, housing, and medical care, will be eliminated in favor of monthly cash payments. At least 30 million of Russia's 143 million citizens will be affected, and they are not happy about the change: last summer, when it was introduced in the parliament, President Vladimir Putin's approval ratings fell below 50 percent for the first time.

some observers believe this effort has a better chance: it comes in the wake of the Iraq War and is a priority of Annan's. The panel is expected to advocate, among other things, expanding the Security Council—a topic of discussion virtually since the founding of the UN. Currently knocking on the door: Japan, India, Germany, and Brazil, among others.

DECEMBER 15

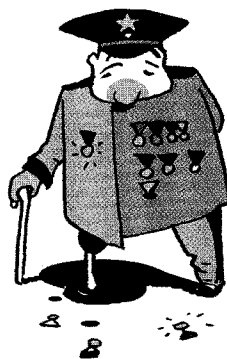
NATO Troops Leave Bosnia

Some 7,000 European Union soldiers take on the task of Bosnian peacekeeping today. The Union is eager to prove that it can play a role in regional security independent of NATO; the Bosnian mission is its first major test. The EU is also establishing a combined European military headquarters, the European Defense Agency, in Brussels. The United States, which has voiced reservations about the effectiveness of the EDA, will most likely keep troops in Bosnia.

DECEMBER 17

Turkey Tries Again

EU members vote on whether to begin negotiations to allow Turkey to join their ranks. Turkey first applied for member-



CALENDAR

WHAT TO WATCH FOR IN THE WEEKS AHEAD

ship in 1987. Its chances are now greatly improved: a recent EU report recommended a "yes" vote, stating that Turkey has met the criteria outlined—economic growth, reduced military influence in politics, and improved human rights. However, Europe remains as uneasy about admitting a large, poor Muslim country to the EU as the United States is enthusiastic about having a moderate Islamic state become part of the West. The report also recommended a special "emergency brake," allowing the EU to end negotiations if Turkey's human-rights record lapses.

DECEMBER 31

Boston Churches for Sale

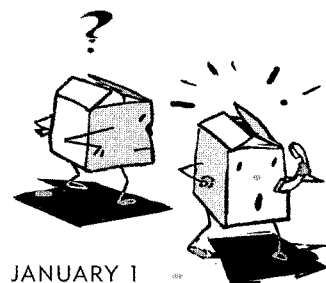
By year's end the Catholic Archdiocese of Boston is slated to close eighty-two of its 357 parishes—the most sweeping set of closures ever by the Catholic Church in America. Many of the parish properties, collectively valued at \$400 million, will be put up for sale. The action is attributed mainly to dwindling attendance and the increasing scarcity of clerics. It occurs against the background of the sex-abuse scandals, which have taken a huge financial toll.

DECEMBER 31

Musharraf and His Epaulets

Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf has until today to make good on a deal he struck last year with opposi-

tion Islamist parties in the parliament, which agreed to give him wide-ranging constitutional powers in exchange for his promise to step down as head of the military by the end of the year. Musharraf has indicated that he may renege and has gotten some legislative backing to do so.



JANUARY 1

New Reconnaissance at Wal-Mart

Wal-Mart's top 100 suppliers will begin using radio-frequency identification (RFID) tags this year. The companies must affix the tags to cases of products headed for certain distribution centers in Texas, where the technology—intended to replace bar codes and scanners—will be tested. The tags can be read by a remote device, allowing stores to track inventory more quickly and accurately. (According to some estimates, retailers lose as much as four percent of sales because items are out of stock.) RFID tags are not new (for example, they are used to allow drivers to pass through toll booths without stopping to pay cash), but this marks their major debut in the retail sector. The tags could eventually be attached to individual items, raising concerns about potential invasions of privacy.

—MATTHEW QUIRK



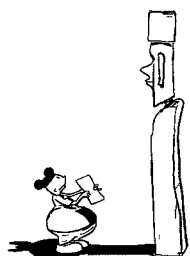
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Bush's Lost Year

James Fallows's "Bush's Lost Year" (October *Atlantic*) contains several gaps and contradictions. I do not understand how Fallows can argue that our invasion of Iraq was a mistake without seriously addressing the belief held by most intelligence agencies that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. Even if stockpiles have not been found, I've heard no one argue that Saddam Hussein did not have the capability to work on these weapons, especially as UN sanctions enforcement had begun to unravel. No cost-benefit analysis of the Iraq campaign is complete without an assessment of WMD potential. Fallows himself raises this question when he notes that many found the war costly but, based on WMD intelligence, necessary. He leaves the question unanswered, but I would argue that if the war was necessary, then discussing its opportunity costs is an intriguing but pointless game.

Fallows ends his article with a discussion that I believe would have been better placed at the beginning: he writes that the terrorists attack us not because of our values but because of our policies. This charge is so incendiary that it colors everything else. First, I do not see how such an argument can be made without acknowledging the work of Thomas Friedman in *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*. Western media, entertainment, and business, and most especially women, are a constant threat to Islamic extremists and a constant temptation to the hearts and minds of youths in the Middle East. The mullahs, Friedman argues, see the West as their enemy. Fallows supports his claim that the terrorists are attacking us for our policies by quoting the observation that Norway has not yet been attacked, but earlier he contradicts this argument by noting that terrorist attacks "especially against Americans and Europeans" have increased. Does Fallows

seriously contend that terrorism is not a global threat to civilization but merely a reaction to U.S. policy? Following the massacre in Beslan, we are reminded that the terrorists' only logic is the logic of a love affair with death.

Fallows argues that the first casualty of Iraq was Afghanistan, but his view of Afghanistan is confused and distorted. First, he fails to mention the elections then scheduled for October—an achievement of consequence. Second, he assumes that the continued influence of the warlords is a defeat of U.S. objectives, although Afghanistan has always been a collection of tribes. And finally, Fallows suggests that U.S. troops should have forcibly entered Pakistan to cut off avenues of retreat for bin Laden, even at the risk of destabilizing Pakistan's government. Here Fallows grossly underestimates the dangers of unleashing Islamic extremism in Pakistan. There is, of course, the nuclear question; but beyond that Saddam would have been left with a free hand while we got dragged into a quagmire in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Fallows proposes a nightmare scenario: the entire Middle East in chaos, with nuclear weapons loose in Pakistan, and Saddam wielding biological and chemical weapons in Iraq—all for the off chance of nabbing bin Laden in some remote cave. Our troop numbers are and have been low in Afghanistan not to save soldiers for Iraq but because of a deliberate policy choice to keep a low profile. U.S. policy has always been to approach Afghanistan lightly, and this choice has had slow but effective results.

Corey R. McCool
Evansville, Ind.

I have read James Fallows's articles and editorial comments for a number of years, and I respect him as one of the more astute observers currently writing on foreign policy and politics. But I take serious issue with the conclusions

he has drawn in his October cover story. Or perhaps I should say that I take issue with his major premise, as stated in the sub-headline "How the War on Iraq Undermined the War on Terror." What Fallows apparently doesn't understand—and the media won't tell the American public—is that the war on terror and the war in Iraq are part and parcel of the same effort. Iraq is currently the focal point and principal battleground in the war on terror.

Marine Major William Truax said it best—in a recent letter from his position on the staff of the multinational headquarters in Baghdad—when he observed, "The bad guys did us a huge favor by gathering together in one place and trying to make a stand. It allowed us to focus on them ... there rather than hunt them down in their home countries." If Fallows needs any reinforcement of this point, consider that the interim Iraqi Prime Minister, Ayad Allawi, told both the UN and Congress that more than half the terrorists in Iraq—not militants, insurgents, or freedom fighters but terrorists—are from foreign countries, principally Jordan, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Chechnya, and Afghanistan, and from groups such as the PLO, Hamas, and Hizbollah.

The Jordanian terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, a high-ranking al-Qaeda operative, is widely acknowledged as the leader of those trying to prevent the democratization of Iraq. The remaining terrorists under his control are the hardcore Baathists and the remnants of Saddam's Republican Guard, which evaporated at the end of major combat with barely a shot fired, only to re-emerge as killers of their own people—as they were in their previous existence. Until the world comes to realize that Iraq is an integral part of the war on terror and is currently its most decisive battleground, we face the very real possibility of abandoning the

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field to the terrorists, only to be forced to engage them in our own country at some future date.

Richard J. Toner
Brigadier General, USAF (Ret.)
Colorado Springs, Colo.

Our presence in Afghanistan is not nation-building but simply an effort to keep terrorists from using that country for another 9/11. This takes only a relatively small number of intelligence experts, linguists, and boots on the ground. Our much larger commitment to Iraq is a strategic move to check the two countries that pose the greatest threat to the stability of the Middle East and the Islamic world: Iran and Pakistan (not to mention Syria). Troops and bases in Iraq give America more options in dealing with Iran's nuclear program and support of terrorism. Likewise Pakistan, in the event of the fall of the Musharraf government.

I find it disconcerting that *The Atlantic* would print "Bush's Lost Year" and "The Long Hunt for Osama" in the same issue two months before the general election. Both are biased and are mindlessly critical of the Republican Administration. May we hear from Donald Rumsfeld or Paul Wolfowitz next? Maybe *The Atlantic* should consider a move out of Boston to a more politically neutral part of the country.

Eugene R. Donaldson
Birmingham, Ala.

In "Bush's Lost Year," James Fallows goes on at great length but misses the point. The real issue is incompatibility of goals, not whether terrorists are merely irrational or "logical" but brutal. Fallows would have had the President focus his energies not on Iraq but on imposing a land-for-peace deal to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict. But the reason such a deal has eluded so many U.S. Presidents is that the goals of Israelis and their Arab antagonists are incompatible: the Israelis want peace (and Prime Minister Barak offered virtually all the land taken in the 1967 war in hopes of obtaining it), whereas the Arabs are determined to destroy the Jewish state.

In using terror, whether against the World Trade Center, Spanish railroads,

Bali nightclubs, or Russian schoolchildren, the perpetrators may well be "logical," given the tremendous disparity in power between them and the countries and institutions they target. So what? The problem is that the underlying goal of Islamic extremists is to recreate a global Islamic empire, a goal involving destruction of the West and the worldwide triumph of Islam over Judaism and Christianity. The extremists must be crushed not because they are "irrational" but because their goals are incompatible with the survival of Western values.

Rael Jean Isaac
Irvington, N.Y.

James Fallows calls "claptrap" the notion that Islamic terrorists hate us for who we are rather than for what we do. However, in Alan Cullison's "Inside al-Qaeda's Hard Drive" (September *Atlantic*) no less an authority than Osama bin Laden contradicts him. On April 11, 2001, Osama wrote to Mullah Omar that the United Nations "has become a new religion that is worshipped to the exclusion of God" and "issues documents and statements that openly contradict Islamic belief, such as the International Declaration for Human Rights, considering all religions are equal." Nor did bin Laden limit himself to declarations. He put a prize in gold on the heads of both President Bush and Kofi Annan. Moreover, the UN offices in Iraq were bombed by Islamic terrorists. Bin Laden never condemned this crime. The UN's principles are more important to bin Laden than its policies (the UN is certainly less supportive than the United States of Israel). If this is true for the United Nations, why not for the United States?

Mario Martini
Oak Ridge, Tenn.

"Bush's Lost Year" is powerful and thought-provoking. However, James Fallows should have dug one layer deeper in his comments on "misreading the enemy." Although I do not support President Bush's policies, I disagree when Fallows disparages his remark that "they hate us for who we are." By assuming that Islamist terrorism represents only a reaction to American foreign

policy in the Muslim world, flawed as it often is, Fallows overlooks a more challenging struggle.

True, al-Qaeda and other Islamist groups frequently cite our support for corrupt, autocratic regimes in nations such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt. They also refer to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, although Osama bin Laden threw this issue into the mix only after 9/11. And the situation in Iraq seems to have added fuel to the fire. But the root cause of Islamist terrorism lies much deeper.

A battle for control of the Muslim world is taking place. Islamists—as opposed to Muslims in general—seek to force all Muslims into a single theocratic state. Bin Laden himself has publicly expressed his desire to whisk the Muslim world back fourteen centuries to the time of Muhammad, when Islam was—by his and others' definition—purer. Forcing the United States out of Saudi Arabia and the Middle East is not the Islamists' objective. Rather, the withdrawal of American influence is seen as setting the stage for the overthrow of Muslim governments from Algiers to Jakarta. Along the way Israel would be destroyed, since Islamists do not accept the principle of a two-state solution. Then, with control over significant oil reserves, a resurgent caliphate might believe itself ready to confront the West, perhaps first targeting the former Muslim lands of Spain and Portugal. Fantasy? Not according to bin Laden's videotaped and widely broadcast statements.

The Islamists demand justice while continually calling for the deaths of "Crusaders and Jews." This ideological approach, based on the claim of sole religious truth, scorns the compromise and practicality of politics. The Islamist goal lies not in empowering Muslims in free societies but in shackling them within a global Muslim polity defined by the repression of the Taliban and the violence of Nazi Germany.

In sum, "They hate us for who we are" may be the most insightful comment President Bush has ever made, even if he could not or would not fully articulate what underlies it.

David Perlstein
San Francisco, Calif.

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I have two points about "Bush's Lost Year." First, criticism of the decision to go to war misses a point about decision-making under uncertainty. Second, it isn't Bush's "lost year"—it's Bush's lost three years.

1) In decision-making under uncertainty, one factor—often the overriding factor—is the consequences of possible wrong decisions. In this case there were two ways a decision could have proved wrong:

- If we did not go to war and Iraq developed nuclear or biological weapons of mass destruction. Remember, previous intelligence surprises (India, Pakistan) have taken the form of unexpected nuclear development.

- If we went to war and there were no weapons of mass destruction. Even with all Bush's bungling, this scenario might not have turned out as badly as the first. The only way it could have come out worse would be if it led us to ignore North Korea, Pakistan, or Iran until it was too late. Which brings me to my next point.

2) Remember how pumped-up and angry we were after 9/11? We were ready to do something. We were ready to go to war. Bush told us to win the war by going about our daily lives. Bush did not take us to war. He took us to half-war.

I was born a few weeks after Pearl Harbor. This means I remember people discussing World War II as recent history. In World War II the nation was at war. Every American was affected. I am not suggesting that we need to reinstate the draft and widespread rationing. I am suggesting that we should be prepared to accept some difference in our daily lives—if only by paying war taxes and enduring some shortages. Korea and Vietnam were half-wars: unless you knew someone who was fighting, you weren't really involved. We know how those half-wars turned out.

*Richard Brandshaft
Vancouver, Wash.*

James Fallows replies:

Views about Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Bush Administration's general approach to terrorism are widely divergent and strongly held. My goal in "Bush's Lost Year" was to report the judgments of a

number of people with unusually strong standing to speak. Most have been directly involved in planning, executing, and assessing anti-terrorist operations. Few have any active connection to partisan politics, and in their personal politics most are Republicans. Over the past three years most have been proved right in their judgments about the war. They noticed the rush to overinterpret intelligence about Iraq's weapons programs; they foresaw that occupying Iraq would be far harder than conquering it; and they warned ahead of time about policies now generally recognized as mistaken—for instance, tolerating rather than controlling the widespread looting in Baghdad immediately after Americans took charge. I quoted most of these people by name, in this article and in two previous ones. A few, having seen the consequences of directly criticizing the Administration, insisted on anonymity.

Re-arguing their full case would take as much space as the original article—and probably would not change minds unconvinced the first time. But let me address a few themes that run through these letters.

One concerns the long-term motivation of terrorists and the best ways to thwart or control them—a subject I will examine at length in an upcoming article. Of course active, committed members of terrorist cells need to be arrested, stopped, or killed. Of course a prevailing anti-American sentiment in the Islamic world grows in part from envy and resentment of U.S. wealth, power, and success. But to reduce the challenge, as President Bush so often has, to being hated "for who we are" creates a serious strategic liability for the United States. The main harmful consequence is to deter us from something that is indispensable in any struggle: knowing the enemy, which in turn means understanding his strengths, his ambitions, his style of thinking, and his vulnerable points. I agree with David Perle that understanding the struggle for control of the Islamic world is an important part of the process. No trace of this has shown up in the President's public utterances. I disagree with Mario Martini's interpretation of the attack on the United Nations. Yes, Osama bin Laden had previously denounced the United Nations. He (or someone sympathetic) launched the devastating bomb assault against UN facilities last year only after the UN had opened an

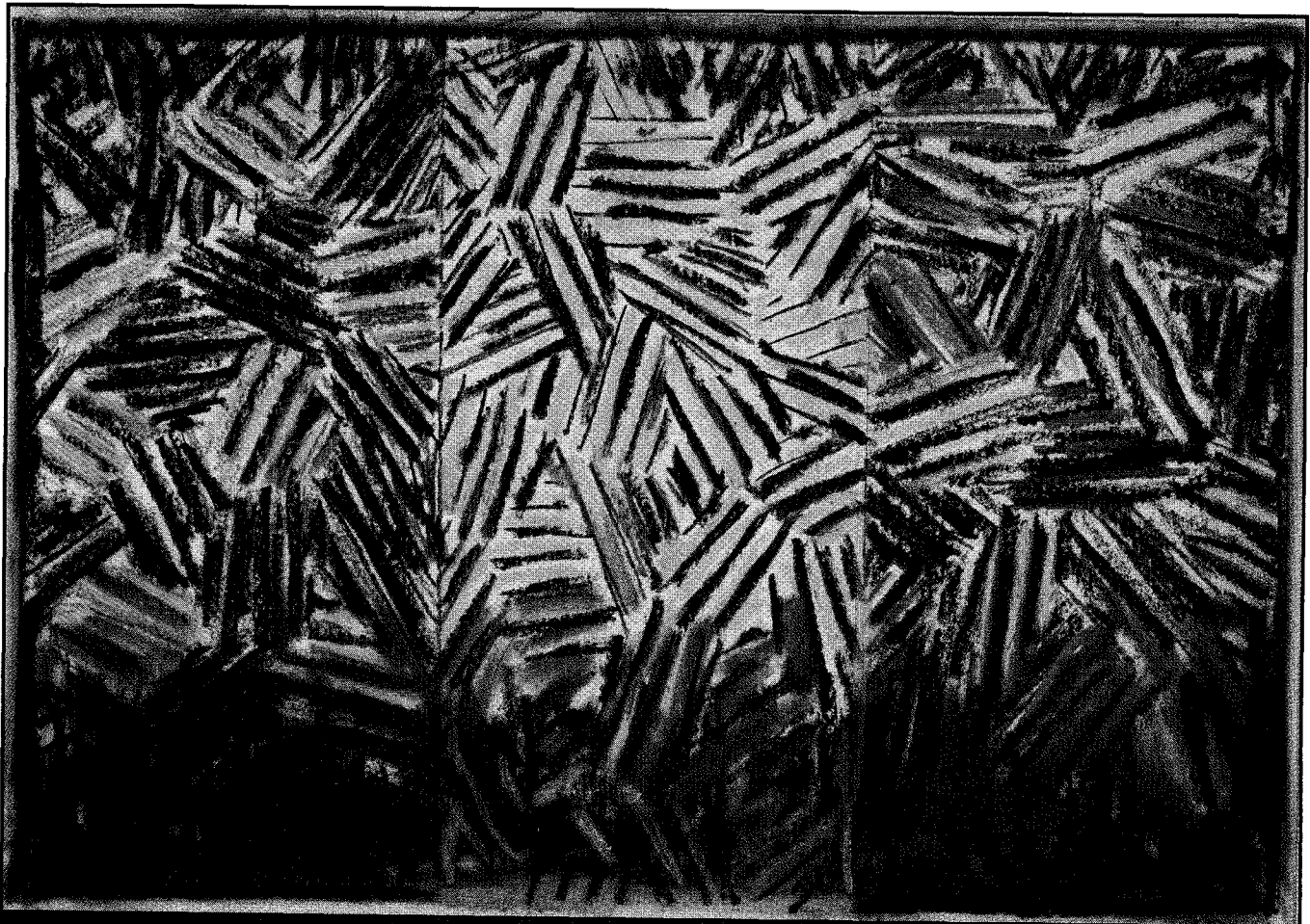
office in Baghdad—and could, therefore, be seen as helping the United States restore order to Iraq. The United Nations was not attacked for what it was; it was attacked because this would strike a blow against American ambitions and plans.

I'd reply in much the same way to Corey McCool. The assertion that Iraq might have had the "capability" to work on nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons is similar to frequent claims by the Administration but is meaningless. Dozens of countries also have this "capability." The Administration made the judgment that Iraq was so overwhelmingly threatening as to force North Korea, Iran, and every other threat to second place. That judgment was questionable at the time and is plainly false in retrospect. McCool wrote without the benefit of seeing the final report from the Bush Administration's head weapons inspector, Charles Duelfer, who concluded in early October that Iraq had no active weapons programs before the war.

I agree with Richard Brandshaft that in the months before the war the United States had to balance two areas of uncertainty: the unknown risk that Saddam Hussein actually had nuclear weapons, and the unknown risks and problems that would be created by starting a war. Unlike him, I thought the second kind of risk was more serious. As long as UN inspectors were inside Iraq, as they were in this crucial period, the risk that Saddam Hussein could do something by surprise was very small. On the other hand, the risks of going to war before the United States had lined up the broadest possible coalition, and worked out the fullest possible postwar plans, seemed very large. Therefore it seemed to me that time was on our side as we waited to attack in the right way. I agree with Brandshaft about the problem with "half-wars."

Like Rael Jean Isaac, I believe that Israel is an important ally of the United States. It is the one democracy in the region; the United States is committed to its secure existence; its citizens need to live free from terrorist attack. I disagree with the implication that it has played no role in the destructive standoff in the region, especially given its settlements policy.

I appreciate Richard Toner's letter but disagree with him on what is often called the "flypaper" theory of America's Iraq strategy:



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that we can attract the world's terrorists to Iraq and kill them there. This assumes that there are only so many terrorists in the world; the more you kill, the fewer there are. The evidence suggests just the reverse—which is why the report from the International Institute of Strategic Studies this summer was so significant. It found that the worldwide number of active al-Qaeda members had significantly increased since the United States began picking them off in Iraq. In any case, it is hard to imagine this having been presented ahead of time as a reason to go to war: "We want to send troops to Iraq as bait, so they can be shot at and bombed, and we can then kill the attackers." Also, the terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's relationship to al-Qaeda is generally thought to be looser and more complicated than General Toner asserts.

As for Eugene Donaldson's question, I repeat that the heavy majority of those I quoted were Republicans. I have previously interviewed and provided extensive quotations from Paul Wolfowitz and Douglas Feith. No senior official from the Pentagon or the White House staff accepted my request for an interview for this article. The timing of the story was dictated by unfolding events in Iraq.

Vox Populi

I read with interest the letter of Joseph M. Price, M.D., published in the October *Atlantic*, which makes eloquently and succinctly the same diagnostic points that were in my mind as I read James Fallows's piece "When George Meets John" (July/August *Atlantic*). President Bush appears to be developing dementia.

As a politically and personally naive young physician I watched Ronald Reagan dementing in office and during his re-election campaign. I saw his obvious developing dementia and was amazed that no one seemed to take public notice of it.

Price is exactly correct in his approach to a diagnosis using the evidence in Fallows's article. Supporting his judgment is correlative evidence from those who have observed Bush's behavior in the White House—for example, his lack of attention to detail in executive meetings and his inability to ask

probing questions—and from campaign-trail reports of his confused and sometimes bizarre ad-lib responses in public appearances, particularly his use of malapropisms.

Daniel L. Johnson, M.D.
Menomonie, Wis.

Joseph Price overlooks the obvious reason for the change in President Bush's debating skills: Bush can no longer speak freely because he is constantly aware that every word he says is scrutinized by opponents at home and abroad for anything that could possibly be turned or twisted to his discredit. The danger of careless speech was brought home with brutal clarity to all politicians when Senator Trent Lott was pilloried for a well-meant, thoughtless compliment paid at a birthday party to an aged friend.

I'm voting Democratic because I'm pro-choice, but let's be fair! For anyone in the President's position, reluctance to debate or to speak off-the-cuff, and hesitation before speaking at all, are indicative not of failing faculties or presenile dementia but of good old-fashioned common sense!

Sonia Bennett Murray
Biloxi, Miss.

Joseph Price's "diagnosis" of President Bush's more recent speaking difficulties as "presenile dementia" is at once laughable and grossly irresponsible. Physicians often "diagnose" famous people in a half-joking manner as lunch-time chatter. The guesses seldom go further, because the likelihood of error is huge without firsthand medical evidence. James Fallows's article was not a medical chart, and Fallows had the restraint to know it. Price's "putting two and two together" this liberally would make psychiatric patients of us all. In this setting flinging a diagnosis, as if the White House physicians should act now to save the President's dwindling mind, is nothing short of ludicrous.

Shane M. Bezzant, M.D.
San Antonio, Texas

For a doctor to express vitriolic opinion from the pulpit of his profession is unfair and a travesty on the public's trust. Let your readers know

that medical doctors by dedication separate their personal feelings from the perceived characteristics of their patients, and most exercise the same restraint when professionally engaging in public matters.

Bill Anderson, M.D.
Laguna Beach, Calif.

College Admissions

I have come to admire James Fallows's ability to see the big picture with respect to any issue, but I thought "The Big Picture," his article with V. V. Ganeshanathan in the October *Atlantic*, offered anything but. I do understand his preoccupation with private, high-priced "elite" institutions. *The Atlantic* wishes to appeal to its readers, and admission to such colleges may well be among their concerns. However, as a parent who recognizes that the overwhelming majority of students in the United States attend institutions other than the typical "Top Twenty" that are the focus of the article, I was dismayed to find only one mention of a public university, UC Berkeley, which happens to be the only public university ranked anywhere close to the very top.

Fallows even cited interviews with representatives from private schools (Harvey Mudd, for example) to talk about the problems of public education. Has public higher education sunk so far below the radar that *The Atlantic* has to resort to that? Fallows also neglected to note that the National Survey of Student Engagement, which he cited several times, was created and is centered at Indiana University, a large public university.

That children of upper-class families view anything other than the Top Twenty as a failure may well show the extent of our broken society in an age when the gap between rich and poor is ever increasing, and educational pedigree can mean more than intellectual accomplishment. However, I doubt that ignoring the value of public education is the best way to solve the problem.

Paul Kelter
University of Illinois at
Urbana-Champaign
Champaign, Ill.

James Fallows and V. V. Ganeshanathan offer a lucid, wide-ranging, and insightful portrait of the contemporary undergraduate-admissions process in the United States. The authors have a keen eye for the increasing unpredictability and escalating competitiveness of the process, the gamesmanship behind early-decision applications and merit-aid offers, the occasionally scandalous preferences afforded athletes, and the ensuing frustration that drives almost everyone involved in the process to distraction.

The most important message from this year's survey of college admissions, however, has to do with a subject that is just beginning to enter the public's consciousness, though it has been a topic of growing contention among higher-education leaders and students of public policy. Fallows and Ganeshanathan offer a sobering report on the cascading financial effects of income inequality, rising tuition costs, and declining state and federal aid on the college-participation rates of students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds.

In an otherwise fine piece of reporting the authors mischaracterize one of the primary conclusions that William G. Bowen presented this past April in the Thomas Jefferson Foundation Distinguished Lecture Series at the University of Virginia. Rather than saying that the nation's selective colleges and universities were turning into "bastions of privilege" as opposed to remaining "engines of opportunity," Bowen emphasized the progress that higher-education institutions have made in enhancing opportunities for "poor but worthy" students.

The critical question, as Bowen, Martin Kurzweil, and I note in our forthcoming book, *Equity and Excellence in American Higher Education*, is whether the nineteen selective institutions we studied have done enough. Our research reveals that students from bottom-quartile families have only one sixth as good a chance of getting into the credible pool of applicants as students from top-quartile families, though those who do make it into this pool have the same chance for admission, at any given SAT level, as any

other applicant. In our opinion, equity cannot be achieved through a need-blind approach when students are so academically stratified by socio-economic status in their pre-college years. Although need-blind admission policies represent a step up from practices that explicitly handicap students who require financial aid, such policies still sustain the socio-economic divide by relying on formal academic measures that are themselves strongly correlated with socio-economic status.

We believe that selective institutions should attach a positive weight to both disadvantaged socio-economic status and minority status in their admission decisions, and thereby actively contribute to social mobility in this country. We recognize that much more needs to be done at all levels of government and at all levels of our educational system, but the nation's leading colleges and universities can send a powerful message by taking action now.

Eugene M. Tobin
Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
New York, N.Y.

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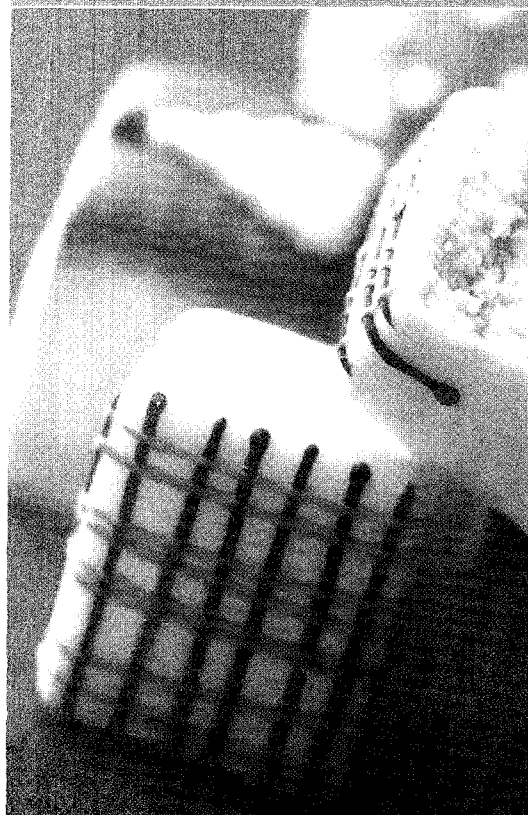
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By interviewing only the insiders of the admissions process, James Fallows and V. V. Ganeshanathan allowed ranking-induced irrationality to find its way into one of their conclusions. Citing complaints from "other colleges" about "aggressive prospecting" for applicants and an "attract to reject" strategy, they concluded that Washington University in St. Louis achieved Top Ten ranking "largely by attracting more and more applicants." If this were true, we would expect Washington University's selectivity to be disproportionate to other indicators of quality, including graduation and retention rates, faculty resources, class sizes, student-faculty ratio, SAT and ACT scores, financial resources, and alumni giving. This is not the case. When Wash U tied Dartmouth for ninth place in 2003, its selectivity rank was ninth (four-way tie) and its acceptance rate was twelfth to fifteenth lowest (four-way tie). If Wash U application rates have risen, this has only brought them into line with other indicators of true quality and value. If Ivies and other top schools recruit less actively, could it be that their admissions departments are able to rest on the laurels of their brand-name status and watch a steady parade of top students from around the country come knocking on their doors?

If the authors had interviewed students and parents, this is the kind of information they could have added to their analysis. Our daughter visited fourteen colleges and applied to six: three "Gotta-Get-Ins" and three "well-regarded non-elite" colleges. She felt no "aggressive prospecting" from any of them. No glossy brochures arrived from the Ivies (not even for a National Merit Scholar and Siemens-Westinghouse semifinalist). They counted on us to know who they were and how to find them, which we did (two visits, no applications). Our own Northeast biases were happily shattered by many excellent colleges in other regions. Details about Wash U (and some other colleges) were first learned by word of mouth from high school upperclassmen, who chose Wash U and talked about it back home. Now attending Wash U herself, our daughter describes its institutional attitude as "We're glad you're here, and please let

us know what we can do to make your experience better."

*Tom Clark
Tallahassee, Fla.*

Your superb coverage of the admissions process omits a significant factor: the loss of endowment revenue in the stock-market bust. Many colleges cannot afford to accept disadvantaged students during these difficult times. Furthermore, the rising medical and retirement liabilities of faculty and staff make tuition decreases almost impossible.

Meanwhile, reliance on the SAT or the ACT poses two problems. These tests give students a poor gauge of worth. Good scores create a pride that may or may not be well placed. Until students face their peers in class, until they face others of like intelligence, they may falsely assume that their potential will carry the day. Written by educators, and timed, the tests fail to evaluate imagination, wit, grace, and determination. These qualities may emerge during the college years or may exist already, but I doubt that admissions officers have time to see them given the volume of applications they must process. Yet the numbers give the admissions officer a simple method of eliminating many applicants.

*Bill Cormeny
San Luis Obispo, Calif.*

The fact that decisions about admission to top colleges "often seem inexplicable or based on whether a student has forged a personal connection with an admissions officer" illustrates what is wrong with the "judge the whole person" ideology that is so much in vogue nowadays. Though it appears humane, this ideology robs applicants of their privacy by opening all their activities to scrutiny, and it puts applicants at the mercy of admissions officers' likes and dislikes. Colleges would do far better to admit students on purely academic grounds, choosing at random among equally qualified applicants and providing for affirmative action by lowering the academic cutoff point for under-represented racial minorities and the poor.

*Felicia Ackerman
Brown University
Providence, R.I.*

I agree with Gregg Easterbrook's article "Who Needs Harvard?" (October *Atlantic*). In 2000, having been rejected in my bid for a spot at one of the Ivies, I went to Rice. It's among the best decisions I've ever made. I graduated this May not only enjoying history more than when I matriculated but also with a scholarship to pursue my dream of studying international relations overseas, at the Australian National University. A college education is less about where you go and more about what you make of it.

*Matthew Chen
Kingston, Australia*

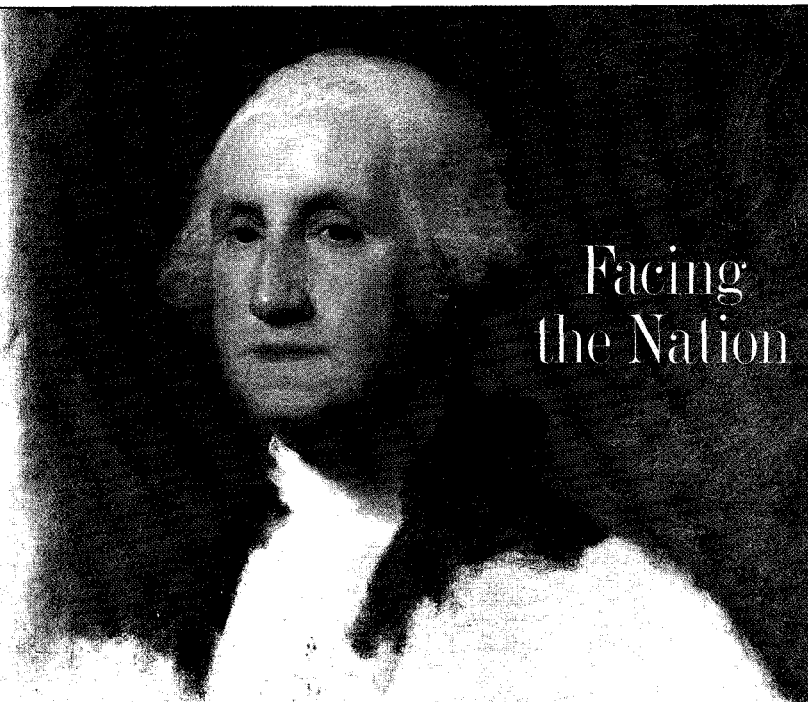
Friends of the University of Rochester are disappointed! This great small research university is mentioned in passing by Gregg Easterbrook as among the "estimable" colleges (though it actually belongs in the "slightly less good than the elites" category). But illustrations of its campus are used throughout the College Admissions section with nary a mention. Surely if its campus can be made emblematic of the American college, its other virtues deserve praise as well.

*Daniel Harrison
Hamden, Conn.*

Gregg Easterbrook rightly dismisses the premise that an education of substance can be found only at one of the fine institutions noted in his "Gotta-Get-In" list. But Easterbrook is mistaken in his reference to a Rhodes scholar this year from Hobart College. Two Hobart alumni have been Rhodes scholars: Ralph C. Willard, class of 1904, and Emerson Spies, class of 1936. However, Julia James, of the William Smith College class of 2004, is the first William Smith woman to earn this prestigious honor.

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*Mark D. Gearan
President
Hobart and William Smith Colleges
Geneva, N.Y.*



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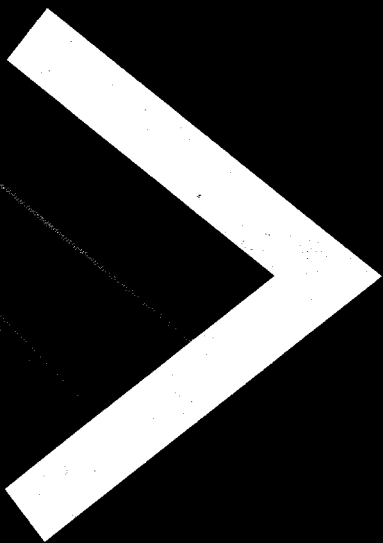
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Never Follow

It's about time colleges finally got serious about measuring how much their students have learned ("Measure by Measure," October *Atlantic*). For far too long they've taken undue credit for what their students bring to class in the form of socio-economic status and inherited ability, rather than for what they are taught by their professors. Unfortunately, answers won't come from the three-hour Collegiate Learning Assessment. That's because assessment is more complex than merely asserting that a test measures how well students have learned to think, not just the particular facts they've memorized. The CLA's makers point out that college seniors had significantly higher CLA scores than freshmen with comparable SAT scores; but colleges need to demonstrate more directly that the skills evaluated on the CLA in entering freshmen and then again in graduating seniors were developed by classroom instruction or campus-related activities.

Walt Gardner
Los Angeles, Calif.

It's a rite of passage for upper-middle-class parents to become apoplectic about the college-admissions process, but what makes them go comatose when it comes to thinking about the kind of citizen that comes out the other side? Admission is not the end, and I appreciated Richard Freeland's points on the blend of practical and traditional education ("The Third Way," October *Atlantic*).

With three kids who are either in or just out of college (and twelve SAT exams, five prep courses, twenty-one college applications, nine AP exams, and more than thirty college visits behind me), I feel particularly qualified to comment on how much value I've gotten for my dollar. At the risk of annoying my children, I've found that college education (even at the most selective colleges) may be one of the worst value propositions around.

A few suggestions from a \$300,000-plus-tuition-paying mom:

1) Create colleges that come in different flavors. Why does every school boast a ten-to-one student-teacher ratio and show happy kids under autumn

leaves (even when the school is located in the high desert)? With a slight nod to selectivity and the pedigree of your kid's peer group, once you're in, course offerings and teaching styles are pretty much the same. On average my kids had only one professor a year they truly enjoyed; the others were satisfactory at best. We need more variation in colleges (look at Warren Wilson and Reed College as two good examples), and we need teachers who can engage and inspire their students.

2) Lose the country-club motif. I don't mind my kids' having to learn to clean a toilet, plant a shrub, or paint their dorm (especially if it'll keep tuition costs down). Telling them that they can study while others pick up their garbage is something I'd never do at home. It's misguided, and it makes for rotten citizens.

3) Use the Myers-Briggs test or some equivalent. As parents we've raised our children to believe, to a fault, that they can grow up to be anything. At some point they have to realistically narrow down the list. Personality tests are not the holy grail, but they do offer a data point for pseudo-polymaths.

4) Make advisers earn their keep. College advisers seem a lot like school-dance chaperones: nice idea, but useless. They get involved too late in the process to be much help. They seem to help pick a major by counting up the students' credits. They don't make helpful recommendations like "Take statistics or learn HTML if you're thinking about a poli-sci major," and they seldom plan for things like junior year abroad. Worst of all, they have only minimal contact with options in the outside world. Professors' pay should be related to their success as advisers.

5) Provide more real-world contact. Internships, community outreach, neighborhood partnerships—if you're a studious reader of bulletin boards on campus, you may score an opportunity for such experience; but it should be made a more formal part of the system.

I suggest that *The Atlantic* differentiate its coverage of the college process by looking at the other end of the pipe next year. It's equally frightening.

Robin Raskin
New York, N.Y.

Richard M. Freeland replies:

Robin Raskin expresses the frustration of many parents about the perceived lack of attention by many colleges to the practical challenges of life. Her cri de coeur helps us understand why practice-oriented education, which combines liberal education, professional education, and workplace experience, is proving attractive to students and compelling for educators. There is abundant evidence that college holds the key to economic security, but students shouldn't have to choose between liberal education and professional studies.

It seems extraordinary to me that none of the five essays on college admissions in the October *Atlantic* mention (much less discuss) the senior military colleges and universities (for example, Norwich University and Virginia Military Institute) or the national service academies. Given that the Defense Department and the Pentagon control such a large percentage of the federal budget, and require a source of patriotic, intelligent, broadly educated, thoughtful, and well-disciplined people, these institutions supply the United States with a disproportionate number of those making decisions about defense, national security, foreign policy, and the expenditure of taxpayer dollars.

Your readers deserve to know how potentially influential people are selected by the military colleges and national service academies, and about the nature, breadth, and quality of the education students at those institutions receive.

Robert W. Christie
Lancaster, N.H.

Teresa Heinz Kerry

Until I read Michelle Cottle's "Brief Lives" bio of Teresa Heinz Kerry ("The X Factor," October *Atlantic*), I hadn't really "considered" her. I knew, of course, that she was John Kerry's wife, and that she had inherited a soup fortune from her first husband, but I hadn't really thought about her.

Cottle's article changed all that. I now think of Teresa (a name that Cottle gleefully points out is "pronounced Tuh-ray-za") as a woman who, if she

becomes First Lady, has a more than excellent chance of being as much maligned as Eleanor Roosevelt—perhaps even more.

Teresa is “eye-poppingly rich,” “mouthy,” “outspoken,” spunky, saucy; has an “international” outlook; and, God forbid, might even turn out to be a “co-President”! And, if you can imagine it, she had the nerve to address the Democratic convention in five languages. Five!

Yet for all her flamboyance, she “purrs” (in her “accented and strangely phrased English”) when she explains the conception the political world has of what’s acceptable from wives of politicians. And that voice! It’s “low, throaty ... in a sexy, Sophia Loren kind of way ... even when she’s discussing what it’s like to be labeled ‘outspoken,’ ‘opinionated,’ ‘tough,’ and even ‘crazy’ by the chattering classes.” Why, she can even “swish her hips and just take off to the music”!

Even worse, she restructured her first husband’s foundation to use the money for liberal causes—“improving early-childhood education, expanding drug coverage for seniors, and helping cities pursue environmentally friendly development.”

This is indeed a woman to watch! I hope the next time I go into a Wendy’s (I love their Frosties), I just might be privileged enough to see Teresa, that “too glamorous ... exotic bird” in her “movie-star sunglasses,” reach down to “ruffle the dark hair of a small boy perched in a booster chair.”

To Michelle Cottle, she “resembles nothing so much as a debutante at a tractor pull.” To me, she resembles a fair wind in a very stormy sea.

Grayce Scholt
Flint, Mich.

Chuck Berry’s 1958 classic, now unfortunately used at John Kerry’s campaign events, is titled “Johnny B. Goode,” not “Johnny Be Good.” An easy mistake, for sure, but an easily avoided one as well.

Nathan S. Carruth
Fort Worth, Texas

The catty swipes at Teresa Heinz Kerry by Michelle Cottle were irritating and unnecessary, and said far

more about the author’s character than Ms. Kerry’s. “She resembles nothing so much as a debutante at a tractor pull” is clearly a personal, snide, and arrogant swipe at a woman not given to fitting into some shallow, politically correct persona. And in context, telling the “impertinent reporter” to “shove it” was appropriate and refreshing.

Finally, why should an intelligent person pretend to be fascinated after hearing a speech “a thousand times”? Is honesty such a liability in our political discourse?

Thomas E. Larson
Helena, Mont.

Blakely Decision

Here is some of what we know about Antonin Scalia, the author of the *Blakely* opinion analyzed in Benjamin Wittes’s excellent article “Suspended Sentencing” (October *Atlantic*):

- 1) He is sixty-eight years old.
- 2) Recent news photos reveal that he’s considerably overweight, even obese.

3) He has a temperament that would once have been called choleric and is now called type A.

4) He eats fatty meats, such as duck, as he revealed after his infamous hunting expedition with the Vice President.

5) His public behavior has become notably odd in the past year: witness the hunting trip, topped by his bizarre, rambling twenty-page defense of it. His speeches have grown increasingly intemperate, to the point where even he agrees he cannot sit on certain cases.

6) He is the author of what Wittes justifiably terms “the single most irresponsible decision in the modern history of the Supreme Court.” It is hard to see any remaining trace of the Antonin Scalia of the 1980s, respected for his intellect even by his ideological opponents, in the nearly incoherent *Blakely* opinion.

In his invaluable book *Leaving the Bench: Supreme Court Justices at the End*, David N. Atkinson paints sobering portraits of elderly Supreme Court justices who remained on the bench even as they suffered mental impairment resulting from strokes. It has happened repeatedly,

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with Justices Grier, Chase, Field, and William O. Douglas, among others. There is no mechanism for removing intellectually incapacitated justices from what has recently proved itself the most powerful political body in our system of government. We as a nation must face the possibility that history is repeating itself.

Joel Jacobsen
Albuquerque, N. Mex.

Benjamin Wittes's article about *Blakely v. Washington* is off the mark on two key points.

First, Wittes argues that *Blakely* deprives political institutions of their rightful authority to meaningfully guide judicial discretion in handing down sentences. But the legislature never had that power in the first place. Pursuant to Article III of the Constitution, the power to impose criminal punishment in any specific case is vested in the courts. Thus the sentencing guidelines (which Wittes correctly predicts are not likely to survive *Blakely*) are an example of legislative usurpation of the power of the judiciary. *Blakely* is only an attempt to restore the constitutional status quo.

Also, Wittes overestimates the potential impact of *Blakely* on the fairness of criminal trials. If the prosecution were forced to prove aggravating factors beyond a reasonable doubt before a jury, the guilt and penalty phases of the trial could be separated to ensure fairness. This is already a constitutionally mandated feature of capital trials.

Gene Vorobyov
San Francisco, Calif.

I found Benjamin Wittes's article very informative but ultimately mystifying. Wittes is right to point out the decision's sweeping and unpredictable impact, but his harsh criticism seems odd. I understand the phrase "maximum sentence" to mean the longest sentence you can serve if convicted of a particular crime. Apparently, in the past judges could add years to sentences on the basis of "facts" that had never been proved in a court of law. I am a historian, not a lawyer, so maybe I'm missing something, but I am shocked to think that if I were convicted of a crime, the judge could sentence me to prison for much longer than the maximum sentence

for the crime of which I was convicted. What can be the objection to remedying this flagrant violation of constitutional protection? Wittes suggests that sentencing guidelines are "salvageable" if judges treat maximum sentences as maximum sentences. Well, yes—they should have been doing that all along!

As a historian I was also puzzled by Wittes's conclusion, in which he compared *Blakely* unfavorably with *Brown v. Board of Education*. Granted, we should all be grateful that the Court ended segregation in schools, but the requirement that schools desegregate with "all deliberate speed" is hardly "crystal-clear guidance." The phrase is an oxymoron, and it was seen as such at the time of the ruling. It was hopelessly vague, not crystal-clear—and that was one of the reasons school desegregation took so long.

Finally, I agree that the principle that separate education is inherently unequal is "clear" and "morally compelling"; but so is the principle that any "fact" that will deprive an American of freedom should be proved in a court of law.

Hyman Rubin III
Columbia, S.C.

Benjamin Wittes says, "Roe, whether you love it or hate it, affected only abortion policy." That decision, however, has affected a whole host of thoughts, laws, and maybe rulings about the rights of individuals over their own persons. I suspect it is one of the broader decisions made by the Court in many a year.

Ellis Glazier
La Paz, Mexico

Benjamin Wittes replies:

Gene Vorobyov is correct that the power to impose a sentence is traditionally a judicial function and that the sentencing guidelines depart from a long pre-existing norm of allowing judges unfettered discretion within an often broad statutory sentencing range. But it does not follow, as he suggests, that this norm is constitutionally required. What, exactly, is wrong with a legislature's attempting to ensure some uniformity in sentencing by outlining and weighting the factors that should guide a judge's discretion? In other words, if it's constitutional for a law to make robbery punishable by anything from probation to twenty years

in prison based on a judge's whim (as it certainly is), then why is it not constitutional for the law to say that a convicted robber's sentence within that range shall be based on an identified set of facts proved to that same judge's satisfaction?

Mr. Vorobyov is also correct that one could solve the problem the Supreme Court identified in Blakely by bifurcating all criminal trials, the way capital cases are now split between a guilt phase and a penalty phase. Doing so would also address my concern about the possibility of biasing juries by mentioning all the aggravating factors that might justify a harsher sentence. It would, however, be a very expensive solution to a problem that did not exist until the Court made it up.

Let me try to clear up Hyman Rubin's mystification. Nobody argues that if the maximum sentence for a crime is ten years, a judge can simply tack on an extra five on his own authority. But defining the statutory maximum sentence for constitutional purposes is a tricky business. What if a statute says that arson is punishable by ten years unless a judge finds a racial motivation for the crime, in which case a defendant can get twenty years? Is the statutory maximum then ten years or twenty years? Should the fact of the racial motivation be regarded as an element of the crime (which must be proved to a jury) or merely as a factor in sentencing (which need only be proved to a judge)? Traditionally, the courts have deferred to legislatures on this question. In Blakely the Supreme Court made itself the arbiter.

A Gloom of One's Own

I read Sandra Tsing Loh's article "A Gloom of One's Own" (October *Atlantic*) with interest. It made me look forward to the day when female sexism is scrutinized as closely as male sexism.

Aren't the women of *The Bitch in the House* really enraged because their husbands will not do what their wives tell them to do? Would the women be willing to submit blandly to their husbands' orders? The comment "Just once I'd like to walk into the house and dinner is made!" is worthy of Archie Bunker.

Are these husbands really making no contributions to the household? Or are their contributions unrecog-

nized and undervalued by their wives, much as the contributions of housewives were undervalued by their husbands in the past? The men's activities are not unimportant merely because the women consider them so, and I suspect the women and men find an equal amount of couch time.

My wife and I have been married for twenty-five years. We are not bitch and bastard; we are just people working to build a household as best we can. I suspect most couples fall into the same category.

*Steven Troy Mitchell
Pueblo, Colo.*

"A Gloom of One's Own" is delightful. At about sixty I have looked after myself for decades, taking care of my cars and my clothes and my kitchen and everything else. Getting things done is as simple as setting priorities, organizing your efforts, and working efficiently—and men are better at all that than women are (that smaller male corpus callosum allows for more left-brain dominance when needed, don't you know).

*Walt Kimball
Palo Alto, Calif.*

I can barely describe the joyful satisfaction I felt after taking a minute (or thirty) to recline on my couch and read "A Gloom of One's Own." It had been a long time since I took time out for myself, and it was well worth it. Not only did I feel compelled to write this letter to the editor, but I wrote a poem as well!

*Katie Leigh
Torrance, Calif.*

Hurrah for Sandra Tsing Loh for finally asking what I feel is the question for highly stressed, career-driven women: What's so great about work anyway? I mean, is editing a magazine that's largely about perfume and makeup really more existentially meaningful than raising a solid individual who also happens to be one's own child? Why?

Almost no one I know truly loves his or her job. My doctor friends dream of early retirement. My lawyer friends are utterly bored. Professors find that the satisfactions of research and teaching are eclipsed by departmental infighting

and the drudgery of committee work. I've had a series of marketing-related jobs, and always tire of them after the first six months. Once a job is mastered, it's not interesting anymore, and none of us can believe we spent all those years getting educated for only this.

Women are now free to be as miserable as our fathers were, and our cheerful embrace of this alleged freedom, our unexamined willingness to sling our children into day care to help those couch-lounging bastards bring home the bacon ... well, how Stepfordian is that, really?

*Claudia Putnam
Jamestown, Colo.*

I haven't read a magazine article for the past seven years, having become the mother of a beautiful daughter. But I was lucky enough to come across Sandra Tsing Loh's article when my stay-at-home husband left the magazine on the coffee table and I had ten minutes to myself.

I've been through the nanny phase, in which I made the bulk of the money for my household, and the work-from-home phase, in which I didn't (much to

my husband's dislike). The work-from-home-and-care-for-the-child phase almost drove me crazy.

This year I traded places with my husband. I took an office job for the first time in four years; he left his job to care for our daughter over the summer and, supposedly, to write more music. What happened was that he found he had no time for music (hmmm). He enjoyed staying home with our daughter. And he developed a dinner repertoire of turkey burgers, salad from a bag, and Trader Joe's frozen fries.

I work in an office of twentysomething men and recently found myself giving an engaged man the following advice:

- 1) It's a myth that women can have it all.
- 2) Don't think that your wife is going to want to work full time when you have children, even if now she insists she will.
- 3) Have children before you're thirty. Otherwise you'll be too exhausted to enjoy them.

After I said that, I retreated back to my

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computer screen, wondering if I sounded too bitter. And then I realized why.

A few years ago, when I had to let go of the nanny, I took my then four-year-old daughter to the beach with my cell phone so I could do a little work while I watched her romp in the waves. While the sun was burning off the fog, and the water reached across the sand for our toes, my daughter turned to me and said, "Mommy, before you were a Queen Mommy." "And now?" I asked her. "Well, now you're a real mommy."

Thanks again for helping me to realize that I'm not alone. Tomorrow I'm going to ask for flextime.

Heidi Bayer
Los Angeles, Calif.

Kudos and gratitude to Sandra Tsing Loh for getting so much right in her thoughtful, smart, and oft hilarious essay about the books my husband and I edited, *The Bitch in the House* and *The Bastard on the Couch*.

I must, though, take issue with one of her points, because she's not the first to make it; in fact, I'm growing rather weary of those whose solution to stressed-working-mother syndrome is that mothers of small children simply stop working. "Is it really such a great loss to cut back on the writing for a few years and just ... get those kids into kindergarten?" she laments. "After all, not all prose is deathless; some of it is terminally ill."

It's a nice thought (I myself wouldn't have minded taking a few years to lie on the couch nursing, napping when the babies did), but like the vast majority of *Bitch* contributors, not to mention mothers in general in this country, I didn't have that option. Dan and I both work six or seven days a week and most evenings (albeit with time factored in to care for the kids when they're not in school) to squeak by in roughly the same lifestyle in which we were raised (moderate home, public school), both of us by mothers who stayed home when the kids (four, in my mother's case) were young. True, we're writers, whereas my father is a physician and Dan's is a professor, but today most professors and even some physicians, not to mention your average accountant, real-estate agent, editor, insurance rep, teacher, plumber, cop, politician, bank

employee, or franchise owner, would be hard pressed to raise a family decently without an additional income. That's one reason why 72 percent of mothers in this country work, 30 percent of them out-earning their husbands.

Tsing Loh suggests that we "slow down to the pace of Ellen Gilchrist," who writes, "One of the reasons I am happy now is that I did the work I had always dreamed of doing. But I didn't start doing it seriously and professionally until I was forty years old ... I was too busy falling in love ... and having babies and buying clothes and getting my hair fixed and running in the park and playing tennis."

It's a nice life if you can get it, but most of us can't. So can we please stop suggesting it as some sort of viable alternative to a mother's making a living?

Cathi Hanauer
Northampton, Mass.

Sandra Tsing Loh replies:

Anyone who can do the math knows that writing—unless it's in a proven financially viable field like Internet porn—is not a particularly sensible economic choice. (Indeed, as a purveyor of such country-gentleman arts as public-radio commentary, short stories, and the occasional novel, I have—like some errant soybean farmer—often brought greater economic benefit to my family when I've stopped producing.) Things like creative freedom, choice of projects, and extended bouts of flagrant self-expression are expensive—yet these are luxuries that oft published female writers like Hanauer and me clearly enjoy, even as we struggle to diaper our children and all the rest. Which is why I think Hanauer's suggestion that most of the Bitches somehow had their economic hands tied behind their backs is disingenuous and possibly even insulting to the teachers, plumbers, and bank employees she speaks of so passionately. After all, unlike several author friends I have on both coasts, bank employees rarely sour the moods of their fellow men with Camille-like complaints about the hectic publicity schedule of (and possible airport allergens encountered during) their seventeen-city Knopf-funded book tours. As to which women have the tougher gig, the stay-at-homes or the draw-the-paychecks, the Gilchrist passage Hanauer mentions also went on to describe Gilchrist's writing up PTA

minutes and plays for the dinner parties of her husband's law firm. If that dutiful wife's work doesn't sound like a grind, I don't know what does. And yet unlike so many rageful women of today, Gilchrist had the elegance not to blame society for her domestic situation. So in short, Cathi, I disagree with you utterly! But I still respect you deeply, you and Dan! Call me! We can work this out! Maybe in a new essay collection!

Missing States

I read with interest the small feature "A Nation of (German) Immigrants" ("Primary Sources," October *Atlantic*). I was dismayed, however, to see that Hawaii is not included in your map of the United States, although its statistics are presumably included in the relevant U.S. Census Bureau report and its population is greater than that of eight other states plus the District of Columbia, according to the 2000 census. Nor is Alaska, the population of which is greater than that of Vermont and Wyoming, represented.

Turning the page to "Calling All Nations," I see that Hawaii is included in the map but mysteriously not shaded in the same color as the U.S. mainland or Alaska. I cannot imagine the reason for this additional oversight.

James J. Nelson
Honolulu, Hawaii

Editors' note:

James Nelson is correct: Alaska and Hawaii were missing from the "Nation of Immigrants" map, and Hawaii was shaded incorrectly in "Calling All Nations." We regret the oversight.

Betting on the President

In "Who Will Be the Next President?" (September *Atlantic*), Nathan Littlefield writes that in 1996 Bill Clinton received 54.7 percent of the vote and Bob Dole 45.3 percent. In fact Clinton received slightly more than 49 percent of the vote in that election. Your statistician apparently forgot the 7.8 million votes Ross Perot drew. You may verify the correct statistics at www.search.eb.com/elections/etable3.html.

Bill Jaaskelainen Jr.
Austin, Texas

Nathan Littlefield replies:

The percentages in the article were not meant to show each candidate's share of the popular vote as a whole; instead they show his share of the two-party popular vote. This is the outcome on which participants in the Iowa Electronic Markets are "betting," and it usually corresponds to the winner of the election. The markets did not include a contract for Perot in 1996. I should have mentioned these facts in the article.

That said, Bill Jaaskelainen's numbers are correct for the overall 1996 popular vote. He might also have noted that with George W. Bush garnering only 48 percent of the popular vote in 2000, we have not had a President elected with a popular majority since 1988.

William Who?

October's "A Look Back: 125 Years Ago in *The Atlantic*" features an editorial purportedly by William Vaughn Moody. But Moody was born in 1869, so he could not have been the author of that 1879 editorial. The columnist is more likely to have been Winfield Scott Moody, a journalist and newspaper editor who would have been twenty-three in 1879.

Susan G. Larkin
Greenwich, Conn.

Editors' note:

Thanks to Susan Larkin for the good catch. In fact, as it turns out, the columnist was neither William Vaughn Moody nor Winfield Scott Moody but William Goodwin Moody.

Advice & Consent

I respect Peter Bergen and the reputation of *The Atlantic* ("The Long Hunt for Osama," October issue), but I think bin Laden is dead. As far as I can tell, no one credible has seen him since October of 2001, when he modestly accepted accolades aired by al-Jazeera for the 9/11 attacks on us infidels. The videos seen since were all sans audio and could have been made before then. The audios released have been deemed legitimate by our government specialists, but since bin Laden allegedly has twenty children, his survivors might

have been able to find a grown son with a lot of his father's genes, raised in an area that would produce the same accent, to make the scratchy recordings released to us. I also think al-Qaeda has been seriously weakened, mostly by our assiduous efforts to block its sources of money. Keeping bin Laden "alive," if he is in fact dead, would be a logical strategy for those hoping to keep the movement alive. Perhaps we will soon hear of a miraculous "resurrection"—something that had some success in another religious movement.

Bill Moulden
Frederick, Md.

In his review of Margaret Mauldon's translation of Gustave Flaubert's great novel *Madame Bovary* ("No Way, Madame Bovary," October *Atlantic*), Clive James praises the "physically handsome" format of the book but chides the editors at Oxford for their choice of anachronistic cover art: James Tissot's *Young Woman in a Boat*, done in 1870, thirteen years after the publication of *Madame Bovary*. To some this will seem a pedantic

cavil, but as James rightly observes, by simply glancing at the cover careful readers may begin to suspect that "in the matter of historical fidelity things are out of kilter" in the text itself—a suspicion that he finds solidly confirmed in this case.

Ironically, James's review sports an illustration of a fashionable young lady whose clothing and hairstyle—even the chair on which she is seated—all place her firmly in the Regency period, some forty years before the publication of Flaubert's masterpiece. The most egregious example I have seen of a discrepancy between cover art and the historical setting of the novel it graces is the 1995 Norton Critical Edition of Ford Madox Ford's *The Good Soldier*, a work whose literary merit is regarded by many critics as equal to that of *Madame Bovary*. Ford's novel is set in the years immediately preceding World War I, yet Norton inexplicably chose for its cover a portrait by Rubens, *Young Woman in a Straw Hat*, from around 1625. Why, I found myself asking, would someone charged with selecting the art for a withering dissection of Edwardian society overlook works

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by Sargent, Eakins, or Whistler, or one of the many talented but lesser-known society painters of that era? That both these gaffes were made by respected publishers leads one to conclude that historical fidelity is becoming expendable even among those whose credibility would seem to depend on maintaining it.

*Gary L. Kriewald
Madison, Wis.*

Corby Kummer's breathless tribute to Alice Waters ("Good-bye, Cryovac," October *Atlantic*) struck a chord with us. My wife and I attended different elementary schools in Los Angeles in the 1930s; both of them featured vegetable gardens that we pupils prepared, planted, and tended. At harvest time we took home a dividend of fresh veggies, and in her case held a "farmers' market" sale of the bounty. The gardens were used in a variety of instructional ways, from teaching about agriculture to illustrating plant growth to helping with arithmetic.

By the time our children began elementary school in Los Angeles, in the 1950s, the gardens were gone, paved over like the rest of the schoolyard. In our day, school playgrounds were mostly covered with gravel. Skinned knees were endemic, and maintenance, I suppose, was costly. The solution was to create asphalt jungles, where the lines for softball, dodge ball, basketball, and volleyball could be painted on without having to be replaced every few days. Unfortunately, the gardens were eliminated along with the gravel.

Our youngest daughter teaches third grade in Woodinville, Washington. Now inspired, perhaps we can persuade her to campaign for a garden at her school.

*Richard H. Hill
Eugene, Ore.*

Although I agree with much of Jonathan Rauch's thesis regarding the need for yin and yang in government ("Divided We Stand," October *Atlantic*), it should be noted that George W. Bush's success as governor of Texas, and his reputation as a "uniter," were due to the vast experience and political skill of his lieutenant governor, Bill Hobby, a Democrat and a legend in Texas. While Hobby basically ran the state government and

successfully worked out legislative deals, Bush, as front man, spent most of his time having harmless, congenial chats with various lawmakers and signing not-so-harmless execution orders. Let's give credit where credit is due.

In national office Bush has been exposed as the featherweight he is: a man with little knowledge of how the world works. When he fell into the clutches of his new nannies Cheney, Rumsfeld, et al., the neocon winds easily blew Bush's positions on critical issues to the right—where he seems quite comfortable anyway, and where the primary goal is not passing legislation but amassing raw power and retaining it.

*Carol de Lamadrid
Houston, Texas*

I enjoyed Alexandra Starr's article on the new kind of Democrat emerging in the South, employing competence, wit, and southern charm ("Dixie Chicks," September *Atlantic*). I was disappointed, however, to read Starr's swipe at Hillary Clinton. Clinton was elected senator by the people of New York, a diverse citizenry who might not cotton to the southern charm Starr describes in her piece. But when Clinton comes to the Hudson Valley, it's standing room only.

Why the jab because her wardrobe includes pantsuits, as if her choice of clothes made her and other similarly attired women less feminine? Or the implication that her liberalism is a negative? She fights for the people, and if that's liberal, more power to her. What a shame to contribute to the false notion that women who are competent, aggressive, and ambitious aren't feminine unless they follow outdated rules. The "Dixie Chicks" may have to abide by those notions to make it in the South, but it's a shame that the perception of femininity is an issue at all. We don't seem to define men by degrees of masculinity, although an overtly feminine man might not pass muster in some circles.

People who deal personally with Senator Clinton find her womanly, feminine, and, yes, even charming. She's an excellent senator, and we are lucky to have her, pantsuits and all.

*Nancy Keenan-Rich
Poughkeepsie, N.Y.*

In "The Hollywood Campaign" (September *Atlantic*), Eric Alterman puzzles over why "so many people in the media find it less objectionable ... for the CEO of General Motors to lobby for relaxed auto-emission standards than for an actor or a director to contribute to a campaign for clean air." Leaving aside the question of how many people actually object to clean-air campaigns, I think I can explain the general phenomenon.

Whereas auto executives engaged in lobbying are rightly perceived to be operating from self-interest, it can also be assumed that theirs is an informed self-interest. No such assumption, however, can be made when a person famous for singing, acting, or just outstanding physical attractiveness uses that fame to influence economic, legal, or policy issues. Though they like to flatter themselves by posing as political dissidents, it is not the causes celebrities choose to endorse that most people, including those in the media, find maddening. Rather, it is celebrities who presume to speak publicly on matters they appear to know so little about, combined with the arrogance of their granting themselves permission to do so and an inconsistency between word and deed that is too childish to be called hypocritical.

*Todd D. Clark
New Orleans, La.*

Corby Kummer ("Principled Pork," September *Atlantic*) failed to mention that Niman Ranch products are available in local markets at prices lower than those quoted on the Web site he references. After drooling through his article, I visited the Niman site, scanned the tasty-sounding recipes, and ordered two pork rib chops (\$24.00), two seven-ounce beef filets (\$44.00), and a twelve-ounce package of applewood-smoked bacon (\$8.00). The products arrived by overnight delivery in good condition. The bacon—in fact, all the meat—was as flavorful as Kummer had promised. But I later discovered the same bacon at Trader Joe's for \$4.69 and the same pork-chop package for \$6.79.

*Richard Rawe
Huntington Beach, Calif.*

I was pleased to see your piece on the world's most athletic nations ("Olympic Elite," July/August *Atlantic*). I have long been annoyed by the medal standings that are on constant display in the media during the Olympics and afterward. What is the point of comparing the U.S. medal count to that of, say, Eritrea, an impoverished nation of four million? Your article gets on the right track by bringing population into the picture. But it takes more than a large population to produce medals. It takes money to pay for coaches, facilities, and living support for athletes. So a better measure would be to divide a country's per capita gross domestic product by the total number of medals it won. If you use this calculation for the Olympics just finished, the top "winners" are, in order, China, Russia, Ethiopia, Cuba, Kenya, North Korea, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and Romania. The United States is eleventh. Of course, other cultural factors come into play that are difficult to quantify, such as government support and overall participation and interest in sports. But this basic analysis is eye-opening.

*Campbell Osborne
Vancouver, British Columbia*

I enjoyed reading Ian Frazier's humorous article "If Memory Doesn't Serve" (October *Atlantic*). Frazier is mistaken, however—or, perhaps, making a subtle joke on the theme of his article—when he says that Victor Klemperer, whom he tends to confuse with his "cousin" Werner, kept a detailed "journal of his days in Berlin during World War II." Klemperer (Victor, that is), whose published diaries precede and go beyond the actual war years, was living in Dresden, where he was a professor of Romance languages at the local technical university (until he was removed from his post by the Nazis), and where he managed to survive the Third Reich as one of the city's few Jews. Maybe Frazier mixed him up with his cousin Otto, who was a classical conductor in Berlin in the early 1930s before he emigrated to the States. Werner Klemperer was actually Otto's son and therefore Victor's nephew.

*Felix Blobel
Cambridge, Mass.*

The Last Word

Owing to a series of editorial miscommunications, Heather Thomas's letter about my September article "The Hollywood Campaign" was published in the November *Atlantic* without my having seen it in advance. This is unfortunate, as Ms. Thomas's confusion about a number of matters manifests itself in a series of false assertions, based apparently on imaginary conversations.

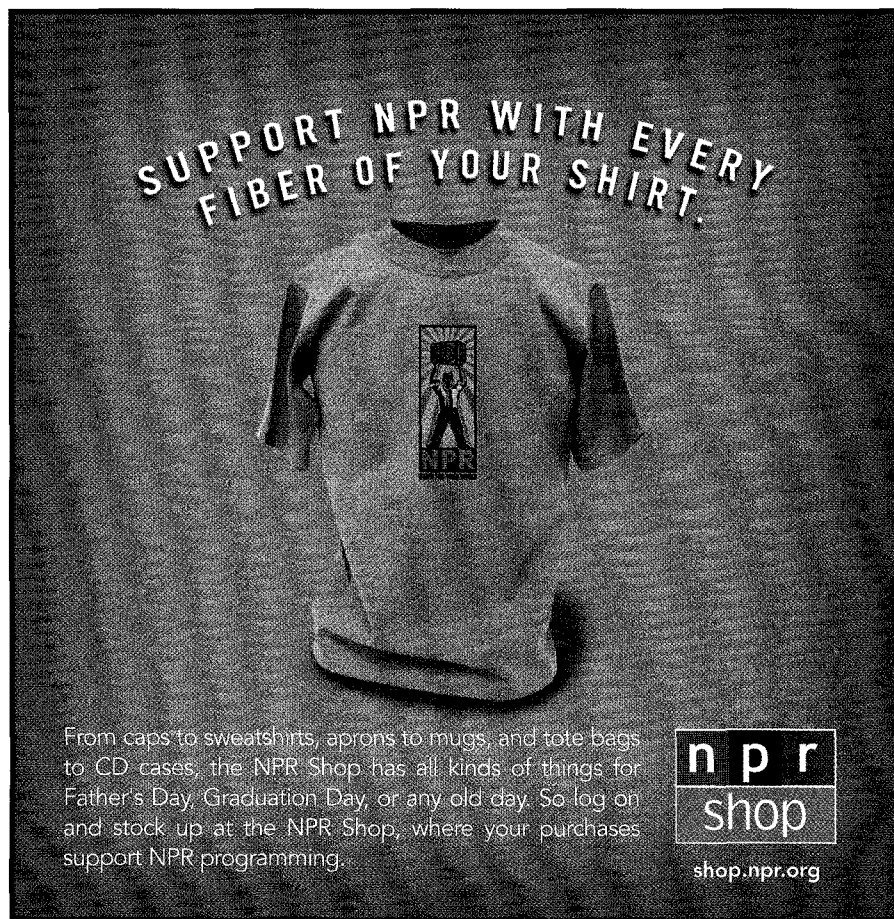
Although Ms. Thomas professes to be able to discern my thoughts and my intentions, I will confine myself to the relevant facts. I interviewed Ms. Thomas one evening in her home last spring. I decided it would be unkind—and unproductive—to quote her at any length lest she be taken (inappropriately) as representative by those who seek to discredit all Hollywood liberals and progressives. After the initial interview I received a series of invitations from Ms. Thomas to breakfasts at her house and other events, which I declined. In the end her participation in the piece was limited to a single sentence in which I described the vehic-

ular population of the driveway on the night she had me over.

This judgment on my part has apparently angered Ms. Thomas. In her letter she accuses me of "looking to pump up [my] populist image, which took a major body blow this year when [I] plunked down a fat wad on a home in East Hampton." Ms. Thomas claims that when she asked about my own charitable giving—an exchange of which I have no recollection whatsoever—I replied, "M-m-my children go to public school!" This strikes me as not only logically inconsistent but impossible to imagine. After all, I have a single daughter, not "children"—something that is rather difficult for a father to mistake. As for that (quite modest) house, my family bought it not last year but nearly five years ago, thereby rendering Ms. Thomas's amateur psychologizing misplaced at best. In any case, I make no apologies. Nothing is too good for the working class.

I leave it to the reader to discern the accuracy of those aspects of her letter that are devoted to reading my mind.

*Eric Alterman
New York, N.Y.*



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THE AGENDA

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COMMENT

News Judgment and Jihad

*Terrorists depend on the cooperation of the media.
It's time to stop providing it*

BY MARK BOWDEN

As I write this, three more Western workers have been kidnapped and beheaded by insurgents in Iraq. The pattern is by now sadly familiar. Foreigners are taken hostage. Videotapes are released of the captives kneeling before their masked, armed captors, and demands are made. As the deadline approaches, new videotapes are released of the captives pleading with their governments, often tearfully, to meet the kidnappers' demands. Then comes video of the grisly beheadings.

The first time this happened, it was horrifying and startling. Now it has become horrifying and predictable. Yet many of America's newspapers and TV networks continue to treat these criminal atrocities as the most important news of the day. Newspapers play the wrenching stories on the front page, often above the fold, and the networks feature them prominently, often as lead news items. Good taste has, thank goodness, banished the videos of the beheadings to obscure regions of the Internet, where those who must see such things can find them, but editors and producers have yet to display any equivalent exercise of judgment.

It is time for American journalism to voluntarily adopt more sensible and prudent standards for covering all acts of terror. When I started working as a newspaper reporter, thirty years ago, editors at least claimed to weigh the relative importance of a day's stories before deciding where to run them in the newspaper. Most sober papers, like *The New York Times*, prided themselves on resisting sensationalism. The steady erosion of this standard has long concerned traditionalists. In today's news world whatever grabs the most attention leads. In general I have no problem with this: people can usually sort out for themselves how the Scott Peterson murder trial stacks up against uranium enrichment in Iran, and nowadays they can readily get more information about either. What disturbs me is the way terrorists use sensationalism to vastly amplify their message. They know that horror and drama capture the media's attention, so they manufacture them. This is why instead of merely executing their victims, they cut off their heads on camera and broadcast the videos. When that gets old, which it will, they will come up with something even more awful.

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Must we help them? Granted, the murder of a worker or a soldier allied with the American war effort in Iraq is newsworthy. It speaks to the danger of the place, and to the pain and difficulty of subduing the continuing insurgency. But the emphasis on the recent beheadings has largely been driven by the availability of appalling video. The news business is not a monolith (fortunately), and it has no governing body and no way of imposing or enforcing rules. But shouldn't editors and producers weigh the public interest along with news and shock value? Would some larger journalistic principle be lost if they decided to deny these killers center stage?

There is plenty of precedent for self-restraint in presenting the news. Most newspapers and networks voluntarily withhold the names of rape victims or juveniles charged with crimes. Newspapers routinely withhold the names of sources and restrict quotations from children. Responsible people have long advocated that television networks withhold tallies and projections on Election Day until polling places on the West Coast have closed. Over the years reputable news organizations have even withheld advance knowledge of U.S. military actions, in order to preserve the element of surprise.

Leading the news with acts of terrorism is often both journalistically unwarranted and—assuming that decent people everywhere would like to see such acts cease—tragically self-defeating. In a democracy, policy is ultimately set by the people, so anybody can alter it by scaring enough of them. Theoretically, a handful of depraved and determined men with a video camera can make the strongest army in the world back down. But to prevail they need journalism's help—and until the world's media stop giving it to them, they will continue killing and videotaping.

Most deaths, at home or abroad, have little real significance beyond the immediate personal tragedy—and, sadly, there is no shortage of that in the world. The slaying of a soldier or a foreign worker in Iraq has a certain

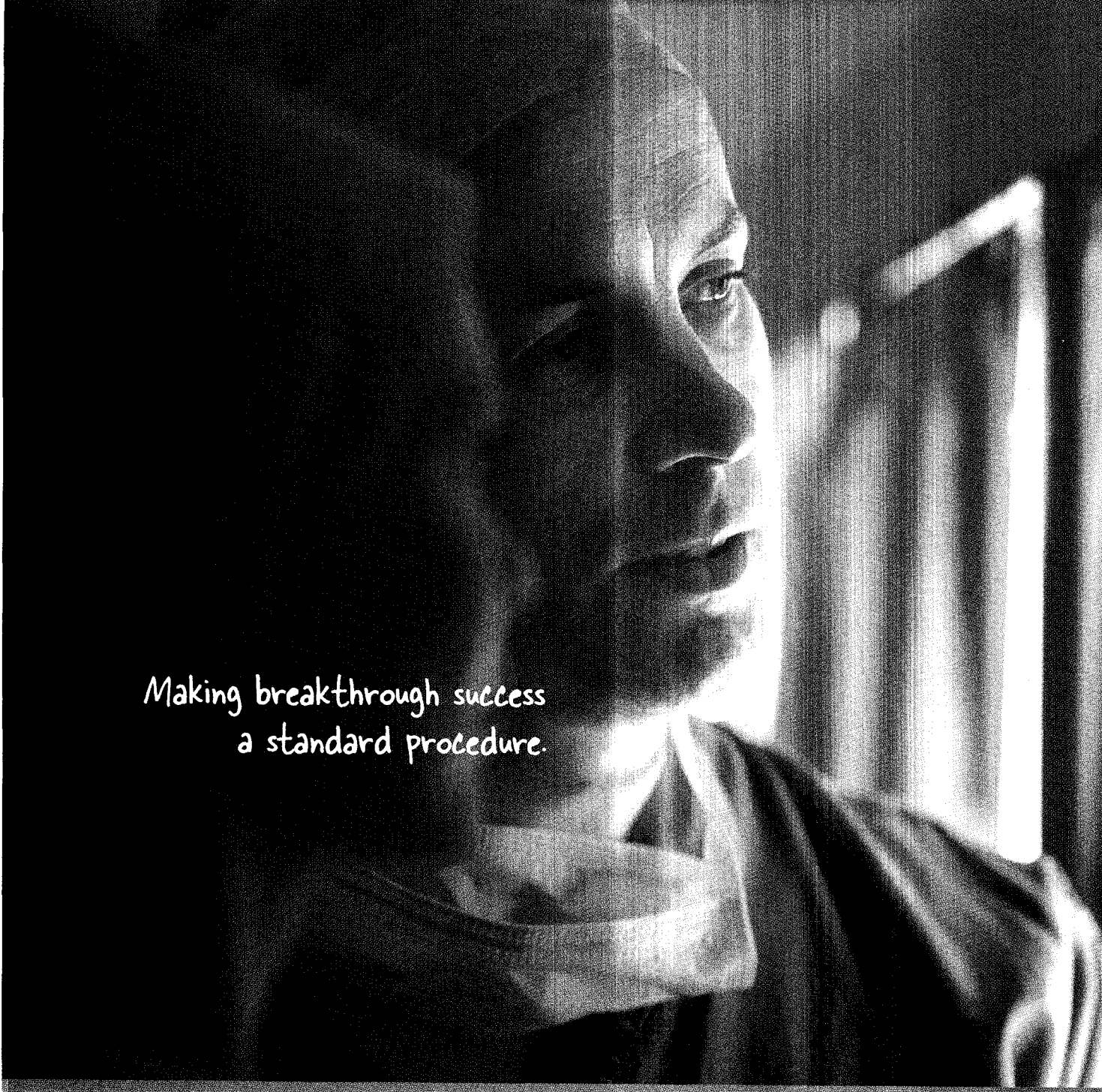
local impact: it frightens those in the vicinity and is likely to prompt improvements in security procedures. But it doesn't significantly alter the facts on the ground. The occupying army still controls the same neighborhoods and roads, and still vastly outnumbers and outguns those who oppose it. This past September, in the same week that two Americans were beheaded, more than 3,000 people were killed in Haiti by Tropical Storm Jeanne. On average more than a hundred Americans are killed every day in auto accidents. None of these deaths is any less final than a beheading—an act that makes political sense only if it can be made to influence public policy. But graphic news coverage, tearful vigils with family members, high-visibility funerals, commentary, and analysis can make any tragedy influential.

Without a doubt, the recent beheadings in Iraq were newsworthy and deserved to be widely reported. The American press should never be in the business of censoring or burying bad news, or of becoming a propagandist for the government or military. It is also true that as such sadistic acts have frightened us, they have better acquainted us with the nature of the insurgency. Sensible people recoil. One might argue that giving such stories prominence isolates violent Islamist extremism, which, like the Ebola virus, is too deadly to spread all that far.

But those beheadings were not the most important events in the world on the days they occurred. Nor were they even the most important developments in the region, where American soldiers and volunteers for the Iraqi police force continued to be targeted, and where officials were wrestling over when to hold national elections. The beheadings led the news in so many places strictly because they were so terrible and because they were on videotape, a medium that so vividly conveys the horror.

They led because the cold men behind them wanted them to. I think we should consider the consequences of continually giving those men their way. ▀

Mark Bowden is a national correspondent for The Atlantic.



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At the Gates of Brussels

If Recep Tayyip Erdogan gets his way, Turkey will be more Islamic and Europe will be more Turkish. Both would be good news

BY ROBERT D. KAPLAN

Who says empires are bad? The multi-ethnic Ottoman Turkish Empire, like the coeval multi-ethnic Hapsburg Austrian one, was more hospitable to minorities than the uni-ethnic democratic states that immediately succeeded it. The Ottoman caliphate welcomed Turkish, Kurdish, and other Muslims with open arms, and tolerated Christian Armenians and Jews. The secular-minded, modernizing “Young Turk” politicians who brought down the empire did not. They used Kurds as subcontractors in a full-scale assault on Armenians, which scholars now argue about calling genocide. Ottoman toleration was built on territorial indifference. Because the same loosely administered imperial rule extended from the Balkans to Mesopotamia, and as far south as Yemen, minorities could live anywhere within this space without provoking issues of sovereignty. Violent discussions over what group got to control which territory emerged only when the empire came to an end, after World War I.

The collapse of the Ottoman sultanate continues to haunt geopolitics: it gave birth to questions about the territorial status of Christians in Lebanon and of Jews in Palestine, and about whether Kurds north of Baghdad should live in the same polity as Mesopotamian Arabs to the south. Moreover, it changed the direction of Muslim thought. For 850 years—from 1071, when the Seljuks defeated the Byzantines at Manzikert, in eastern Anatolia, to the end of World War I—the House of Islam had drawn its spiritual direction from Turkey, not from Arabia or Iran. But with the official abolition of the Constantinople-based caliphate, in 1924, there was no longer any universally accepted authority for the interpretation of Muslim law. In the competition for doctrinal legiti-

macy that has followed, the most radical interpretations have won out.

Within Asia Minor itself, anarchy and invasion following the Great War led to the emergence of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s fiercely secularist regime, which delivered stability and a pro-Western orientation, but at a significant cost. The cost was a militarized state and the suppression of Islam—



under which the Anatolian peasantry and working class increasingly chafed. Democracy developed late and anemically, leading to ineffectual minority governments. Because Turkish politicians assumed that the military would always rescue them in the lurch, at a subliminal level they never felt the need to act responsibly—and so they didn’t.

The first break in this dreary chronicle was the election of Turgut Ozal to the prime ministership, in 1983. Ozal was a wily politician from the heartland of Asia Minor who shared the deep religiosity and crass nouveau riche tastes of many Turks. He loved to read the Koran and watch soap operas, to bang his head against the carpet in a Sufi mosque and go to Texas barbecues. He restored religion to Turkey’s political space without threatening the

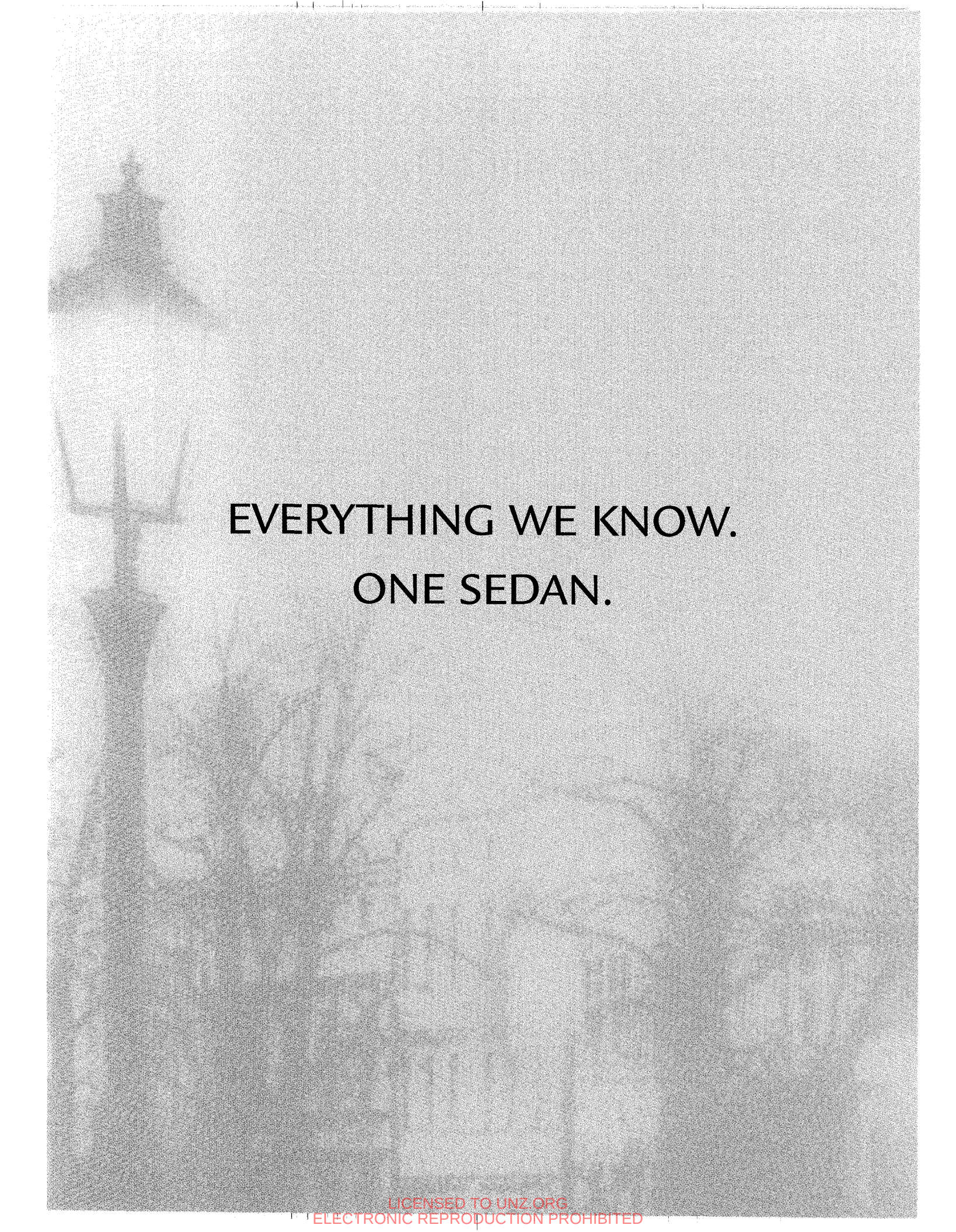
country’s pro-Western orientation or its tendency toward tolerance. He gradually wrested control over foreign policy away from the military—a healthy thing for an elected politician to do. By the early 1990s he was veering toward a neo-Ottomanism that would have effected a grand compromise with the Kurds, based on the Islamic faith that Turks and Kurds had in common. But Ozal died suddenly of a heart attack in 1993. It was said that he ate himself to death, just as Atatürk had drunk himself to death.

Because Turkey, like Tunisia, is a real state and not (like so many other places in the Middle East, Iraq included) just a geographical figure of speech, things don’t collapse there;

they simply go lugubriously downhill. The corruption and irresponsibility of lackluster, forgettable politicians became so extreme in the late 1990s that the military re-emerged in the guise of a National Security Council, which engineered, in stages, what became known as a soft coup. One analyst told me at the time, speaking of the council’s meetings, “The generals bring thick dossiers from which to lecture, and the civilian cabinet ministers come as tourists to listen.”

At the same time, something began to happen within Turkey’s Islamic movement. A group of disciples parted ways with Necmettin Erbakan, their longtime mentor and the grand old man of Turkish Islam. Erbakan’s movement had been involved in the hurly-

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burly of party politics for decades, and was thus intrinsically more Westernized than its counterparts in the Arab world. Nevertheless, Erbakan's visits to Libya and Iran, and his support for a religious school system that would have churned out Muslim firebrands, alienated him from the mass of middle-class voters. And so in 2001 the Justice and Development Party came into being. Its leader was one Recep Tayyip Erdogan, a politician in his forties who grew up poor in Kasimpasha, one of Istanbul's most notoriously crime-infested districts. Erdogan spoke no foreign languages. His wife wore a headscarf. He was hopelessly unsophisticated by the standards of Turkey's Europeanized ruling class. Yet he was a skilled politician, armed with a management degree, who had been a popular mayor of Istanbul in the mid-1990s, adroit at improving utilities, cleaning the streets, and making municipal authorities more accessible through telephone hotlines.

By 2002, when the United States had conquered Afghanistan and was in the early stages of planning to invade Iraq, Erdogan, a devout Muslim, had emerged as not just the most popular politician in Turkey but also—so fed up were Turkish voters with the whiskey-sipping secular nonentities who had led their country to political and economic ruin—the *only* popular politician in Turkey.

In breaking away from his powerful mentor Erbakan (after whom he had named a son), Tayyip Erdogan was able to emphasize his reformist credentials and reach beyond the Islamist base. He was seen as sincere and authentic. He wasn't just another Turkish politician on the make but, rather, a competent manager who made things happen. By the late summer of 2002 opinion polls showed that in the coming November election his party would win by a landslide, without the need for coalition partners. The Justice and Development Party achieved its overwhelming popularity even though Erdogan himself had recently been technically barred from running for Parliament, as part of a last-gasp attempt by the Turkish military to keep an Islamist party, however moderate, from assuming power. The Bush

Administration should have been talking with Erdogan before the election, through back channels, to find out his terms regarding support for an invasion of Iraq. But Washington was so locked into an old-fashioned paradigm about Turkey—based on the idea that it could always rely on the military there—that it did not even pressure the military authorities to lift the ban on Erdogan's political activity. Of course the Justice and Development Party won handily—and it owed the Bush Administration nothing when it did so. Because the ban on Erdogan had to be rescinded before he could become Prime Minister, for a few months the job went to his colleague Abdullah Gul.

One of Erdogan's enduring traits as a politician is his lack of small-mindedness. Thus, despite the cold shoulder he initially got from Washington, he worked arduously behind the scenes to get parliamentary approval

This December a hesitant European Union will decide whether to open negotiations for Turkey to join. Its hesitancy has legitimate and illegitimate reasons. The legitimate ones center on the difficulty of digesting a country of 70 million people—one that is far poorer and more populous than many of the Central and Eastern European nations recently admitted to the EU. The illegitimate ones center on the fact that—well, Turkey is Muslim. Does Europe want that many Muslims within its community?

The answer should be that Europe has no choice. It is becoming Muslim anyway, in a demographic equivalent of the Islamic conquest of the early Middle Ages, when the Ottoman Empire reached the gates of Vienna. More to the point, Turkey is not only contiguous to Europe but also is already economically intertwined with it. The only issue that remains is whether Europe

Turkish voters were so fed up with the secular nonentities who had led their country that by 2002 Tayyip Erdogan, a Muslim reformer, was Turkey's only popular politician.

for U.S. troops to pass through Turkey en route to Iraq. He failed by only a whisker, and not just because of recalcitrant Islamists in his own party but also because the secular opposition in Parliament—the Republican People's Party—gave no support to the United States. Erdogan's lobbying effort came immediately after his party, which had no previous governing experience, assumed power. The job wasn't made any easier by the fact that legally he wasn't yet the Prime Minister, or even a member of Parliament.

Erdogan's moderate, reformist Islam now offers the single best hope for reconciling Muslims—from Morocco to Indonesia—with twenty-first-century social and political realities. The Bush Administration understood this too late to save itself from the fiasco of March 2003, when Turkey failed to authorize the passage of U.S. troops. But what about the Europeans?

will encourage Islamic moderation through economic development in Turkey. Though American troops are fighting and dying in Iraq, ultimately the Europeans, because of geography and their own demographic patterns, have more at stake in the stabilization of the region. And the surest way to advance that stabilization is to make Turkey part of Europe.

Never before has the West been so lucky in Turkey as now. The re-Islamization of Turkey through the rejuvenation of the country's Ottoman roots was going to happen anyway; Atatürk's republican-minded secularization had simply gone too far. The only question was whether this retrenchment from Kemalism would take a radical or a moderate path. Erdogan's political leanings suggest the latter. Europe should seize the opportunity. ▀

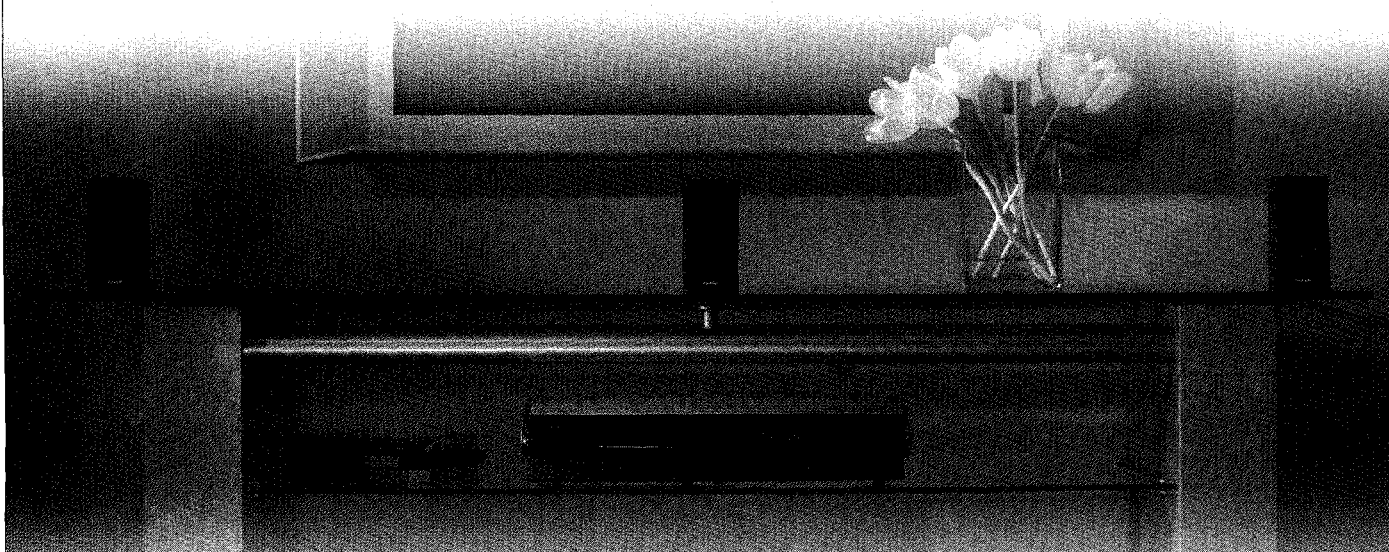
Robert D. Kaplan is an Atlantic correspondent. He is the author of Eastward to Tartary: Travels in the Balkans, the Middle East, and the Caucasus.

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How *Not* to Catch a Terrorist

A ten-step program, from the files of the U.S. intelligence community

BY ANONYMOUS

During the recent Senate confirmation hearings for Porter J. Goss, the new CIA director, Senator Dianne Feinstein read a provocative paragraph from a letter that had been sent to the House and Senate Intelligence Committees. The gist of the letter was that key pre-9/11 intelligence failings were the result not primarily of budgetary, structural, or organizational problems (as suggested by the official 9/11 Commission Report) but, rather, of bad decisions by individuals—"unelected, unaccountable officials who made an art of outlasting their elected superiors." What made the letter particularly notable was its author: a twenty-two-year CIA veteran named Michael Scheuer—now better known as Anonymous, the author of the books *Imperial Hubris: Why the West Is Losing the War on Terror* (2004) and *Through Our Enemies' Eyes: Osama bin Laden, Radical Islam, and the Future of America* (2002)—who headed the Agency's bin Laden unit from 1996 to 1999.

The full text of the letter, which for the first time lays out ten crucial and specific failures by the intelligence community in the run-up to 9/11, has never appeared in print. *The Atlantic* has acquired a copy, key sections of which are reproduced below.

TO: THE MEMBERS OF THE
SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE
ON INTELLIGENCE ...

I will briefly summarize ten instances since 1996, picked from dozens of others to protect classified data, in which the decisions of senior Intelligence Community bureaucrats—not legal "walls", organizational structure, or inadequate budgets—have been at the core of our failure against Bin Laden. All of the following information has been passed in testimony, in documents, or in both by myself and other CIA officers to one or more of the four panels investigating the 11 September attacks: two internal CIA investigations, the congress's Joint Commission, and the Kean Commission. None of these panels, to my knowledge, have yet focused on the reality that, while the 11 September attacks probably were unstoppable, it was decisions by human beings—featuring arrogance, bad judgment, disdain for expertise, and bureaucratic cowardice—that made sure the Intelligence Community did not operate optimally to defend America.

1. MID-TO-LATE 1996: CIA's Bin Laden unit acquired detailed information about the careful, professional manner in which al-Qaeda was seeking to acquire nuclear weapons ... there

could be no doubt after this date that al-Qaeda was in deadly earnest in seeking nuclear weapons. The report was initially suppressed within CIA, and then published in a drastically shortened form. Three officers of the Agency's Bin Laden cadre protested this decision in writing, and forced an internal review. It was only after this review that this report was provided in full to Community leaders, analysts, and policymakers ...

2. DECEMBER 1996: From a CIA officer detailed to another Intelligence Community (IC) agency and serving overseas, the Bin Laden unit learned of the availability of a communications conduit used by Bin Laden and al-Qaeda. The other IC agency refused to exploit the conduit and threatened legal action against the Agency officer who advised of its existence. This officer bravely continued to supply the information; and I asked senior Agency officers to intervene with the other IC agency. There ensued a desultory inter-agency discussion without resolution. The CIA was forced to devise its own ability to exploit the communications conduit and secured about half of the available material. The other IC agency was able to secure the other half, but refused to share it. This capability was

later lost because of an August 1998 leak to the media by the U.S. military.

3. DECEMBER 1996–JUNE 1999:

The CIA's Bin Laden unit repeatedly and formally requested assistance from the U.S. military to help plan operations against Bin Laden and al-Qaeda. We needed and asked for special operations officers. After pressing for eighteen months, we were sent two non-special operations individuals who had experience only on Iran. The Bin Laden unit received no support from senior Agency officials vis-à-vis the U.S. military.

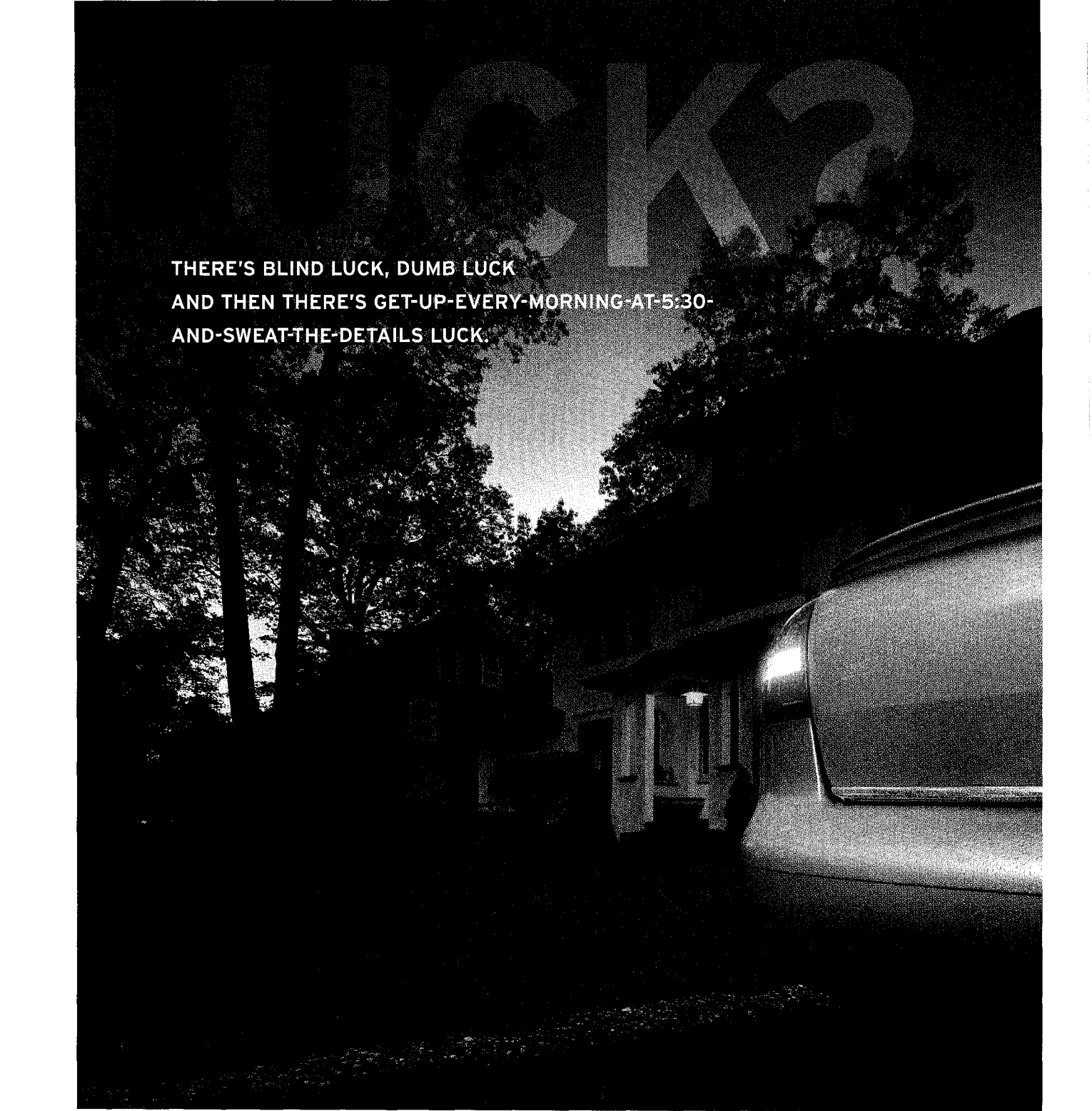
4. FEBRUARY 1996–MAY 1998:

The Bin Laden unit and several other senior CIA officers requested transcripts rather than summaries of electronic collection against al-Qaeda ... [V]erbatim transcripts are operationally useful, summaries are much less so, and they are usually not timely. The answer to these requests in every case was no. At one point the senior operations officer for an Intelligence Community component said that the National Security Act of 1947 gave her agency control of "raw" signals intelligence, and that she would not pass such material to CIA.

5. AUGUST–SEPTEMBER 1997:

For most of a year the Bin Laden unit prepared for an operation in a foreign city that was set to come to fruition in late-summer 1997. The unit's lead U.S.-based officer on this operation was an extraordinarily able analyst from another IC component; she knew the issue cold. Days before the operation occurred the IC component ordered her back to its headquarters. She protested, but was told that she would not be promoted if she balked at returning. I protested to my superiors and to the three most senior officers of the IC component who were then in charge of terrorism. All refused to intervene. The operation was much less well exploited because of the loss of this officer. A year later, al-Qaeda destroyed U.S. facilities in the area near the foreign city of the under-exploited operation.

6. APRIL–MAY 1998: The Agency's Bin Laden unit was ordered disbanded and reduced to a small branch. This was done, so far as I know, without the knowledge of the DCI [Director



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of Central Intelligence] ... When DCI found out about this plan, he intervened in mid-May 1998. By doing so, the DCI preserved the unit and dodged the bullet of having to explain to the American people why the Agency thought Bin Laden was so little of a threat that it had destroyed the Bin Laden unit weeks before two U.S. embassies were demolished. Needless to say, the on-again, off-again signals about the unit's future status made for confusion, distraction, and much job-hunting in the last few weeks before al-Qaeda's August 1998 attacks in East Africa.

7. MAY 1998–MAY 1999: The CIA officers working Bin Laden at Headquarters and in the field gave the U.S. government about ten chances to capture Bin Laden or kill him with military means. In all instances, the decision was made that the "intelligence was not good enough." This assertion cannot be debated publicly without compromising sources and methods. What can be said, however, is that in all these cases there was more concern expressed by senior bureaucrats and policymakers about how international opinion would react to a U.S. action than there was concern about what might happen to Americans if they failed to act. Indeed, on one occasion these senior leaders decided it was more important to avoid hitting a structure near Bin Laden's location with shrapnel, than it was to protect Americans. Two other points: the truth has not been fully told about the chance to militarily attack Bin Laden at a desert hunting camp being used by wealthy Gulf royals; and our best chance to capture Bin Laden—an operation which showed no U.S. hand, risked no U.S. lives, and was endorsed by senior commanders of the Joint Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg—was cancelled because senior officials from the Agency, the Executive Branch, and other Intelligence Community components decided to accept assurances from an Islamic country that it could acquire Bin Laden from the Taliban. U.S. officials accepted these assurances despite the well-documented record of that country withholding help—indeed, it was a record of deceit and obstruction—regarding all issues pertaining

to Bin Laden between December 1996 and May 1998. The makers of this decision ignored the extensive documentary record that showed nothing but uncooperativeness from this Islamic country.

8. AUGUST 1998: After the bombing of two U.S.-based embassies in East Africa, the senior CIA managers asked what the Bin Laden unit needed most to enhance the attack against al-Qaeda. I again raised our dire need for verbatim reports derived from electronic collection. These senior managers ordered this to be arranged. After receiving less than a dozen such transcripts the process stopped. Despite repeated requests, I failed to get the flow of data restored. Also, tragically, no member of the Bin Laden unit was asked to testify before the State Department's accountability boards for the 1998 embassy bombings. This exclusion ensured that the systemic problems embedded in the Intelligence Community—which had become overwhelmingly clear before the 1998 al-Qaeda attacks—were not raised before the only pre-9/11 panel that might have been able to initiate remedial action.

9. JUNE 1999: On moving to a new position, I forwarded a long memorandum to the Agency's senior-most officers—some are still serving—describing an array of fixable problems that were plaguing America's attack on Bin Laden, ones that the Bin Laden unit had encountered but failed to remedy between and among Intelligence Community components ... The problems outlined in the memorandum stood in the way of attacking Bin Laden to the most effective extent possible; many remain today. Insufficient or no support from other Intelligence Community components were highlighted in the memo, as were the issues of the grossly insufficient number of experienced officers assigned to the Bin Laden unit and the at best mediocre performance of our intelligence allies—especially in Western Europe—in supporting U.S. efforts against Bin Laden. I never received a response to this memorandum.

10. SEPTEMBER 2004: In the CIA's core, U.S.-based Bin Laden oper-

ational unit today there are fewer Directorate of Operations officers with substantive expertise on al-Qaeda than there were on 11 September 2001. There has been no systematic effort to groom al-Qaeda expertise among Directorate of Operations officers since 11 September ... The excellent management team now running operations against al-Qaeda has made repeated, detailed, and on-paper pleas for more officers to work against the al-Qaeda—and have done so for years, not weeks or months—but have been ignored ...

The deaths of three thousand Americans—and the many more destined to die at Bin Laden's hands—may well be attributable to the type of decisions noted above, the refusal of senior bureaucrats to listen to their subordinates, and, most of all, the unwillingness of senior leaders across the Intelligence Community to remedy fixable problems if it meant making decisions that disturbed the bureaucratic status quo, telling the truth about organizational and operational problems to the congressional oversight committees, or alarming political leaders who might ask the Community to take risks in defense of America ...

The pattern of decision-making I have witnessed ... seems to indicate a want of moral courage, an overwhelming concern for career advancement, or an abject inability to distinguish right from wrong. Before the Kean Commission's recommendations are implemented, and a vastly expensive and disruptive scheme is undertaken to overhaul an Intelligence Community weaker today than on 11 September 2001, it is worth reviewing the testimonies and documents the commissioners and the other 11 September panels have in hand, and reassessing where primary responsibility lies. Is it really small budgets, poor organization, and legal hurdles that stopped the Community from dealing with Bin Laden to the best of its ability? Or is it the results of decisions by human beings who refuse to do either what is in their power and patently necessary, or that which is asked for by their elected chiefs in Congress and the Executive ... ▀



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Strait-jacket

December elections could edge Taiwan closer to a symbolic declaration of independence—and the United States toward military conflict with China. There's one way out

BY TREVOR CORSON

If the war on terror can be said to have a silver lining, it's that the United States has steered clear of conflict with China. Before 9/11 neoconservatives in Washington were more worried about an eventual war with Beijing than with Baghdad, and in 2001 the Pentagon declared China an emerging threat. But since 9/11 the government in Beijing has made common cause with the United States by squelching terrorist activity on China's western borders, and has cooperated with American efforts to contain North Korea. With global commerce fueling its stupendous economic growth, China is becoming integrated into the community of nations as never before—as best evidenced, perhaps, by Beijing's successful bid to host the 2008 Olympics.

This easing of tension has been especially welcome on the matter of Taiwan—the island that China still considers a renegade province. Trade and investment have blossomed so quickly across the Taiwan Strait that China has become Taiwan's largest export market, and also the destination for some \$70 billion or more in Taiwanese capital. To some, these developments suggest that time is on the side of a peaceful solution to the problem of Taiwan's disputed status.

But the reality may be quite the opposite. In fact, a number of analysts in both America and East Asia believe that military conflict between China and Taiwan is not only likely but imminent. Just how imminent depends partly on the Taiwanese legislative elections scheduled for December 11. If pro-independence parties gain a majority in the legislature, the stage will be set for a confrontation, producing a hellish prospect for U.S. foreign policy: on

top of its ongoing military commitment in the Middle East, the United States may face a Chinese attack against Taiwan, a fragile democracy that America has promised to help protect.

On some level, of course, the idea that China would actually attack Taiwan—rather than merely threaten to do so, as it has for years—makes no sense. Attacking would invite a military response from the United States, and even without American intervention, it's not clear that China's military is up to the task of seizing the island. China would also risk losing the trade relationships that drive its economic growth.

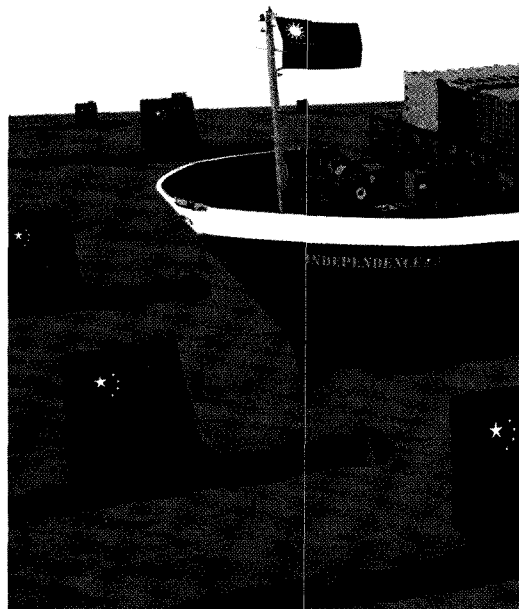
Nevertheless, the threat of a Chinese attack has loomed over Taiwan since at least 1972, when China's Pre-

versity, told me recently. But he had just returned from his fourth trip to China in the past two years, and the mood he'd encountered while speaking privately with Chinese policy experts was decidedly pessimistic. "What I heard on several occasions," Christensen said, "is that you see a much more serious consideration of actual conflict with the United States over Taiwan."

The disagreement over Taiwan's status dates to 1949, when the Chinese Communists emerged victorious in China's bloody civil war and the vanquished Nationalists fled to the island. For years both sides clung to the notion that Taiwan was part of a larger China: the Communists hoped to finish the war and take the island; the Nationalists hoped to use it as a base from which

to retake the mainland. After half a century under U.S. protection, few people in Taiwan still look to China for their national identity. But on the mainland a very different sort of evolution has occurred. In the late 1970s Deng Xiaoping began steering China away from communism toward capitalism, and subsequent Chinese leaders have justified their rule not with communist ideology but with the promise of making China prosperous and powerful. Bringing Taiwan back under the sway of the mainland—a prospect China calls "reunification"—would be a crucial sign that this promise had been fulfilled.

Yet China's leaders haven't indicated that they want to *occupy* Taiwan. Indeed, ever since Deng proposed a "one country, two systems" solution, in 1979, China has said that Taiwan could keep its own administration and even its military organs intact. More likely what they want is simply to prevent Taiwan from securing the legal independence that would end the promise of eventual reunification. "The Party needs to avoid humiliation on Taiwan more than it needs to gain a big victory on it," Christensen explains. A genuine sense of nationalism is involved, but the Chinese government also has domestic



mier Zhou Enlai, in negotiations with Richard Nixon, refused to renounce the use of force against the island. Subsequent Chinese leaders have reiterated the point. Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping threatened the Carter Administration with an attack against Taiwan in 1978, and repeated the warning to U.S. officials during the 1980s. In 1995 China conducted military exercises near Taiwan, and President Jiang Zemin, in a major policy speech, reminded the world that China would use military force against the island if necessary.

"I don't think China *wants* to use force," Thomas Christensen, a professor of international affairs at Princeton Uni-

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USES OF ZOCOR

ZOCOR is a prescription drug that is indicated as an addition to diet for many patients with high cholesterol. For patients at high risk of coronary heart disease (CHD) because of existing heart disease, diabetes, vascular disease, or history of stroke, ZOCOR is indicated along with diet to reduce the risk of death by reducing coronary death; reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke; and reduce the need for revascularization procedures.

WHEN ZOCOR SHOULD NOT BE USED

Some people should not take ZOCOR. Discuss this with your doctor.

ZOCOR should not be used by patients who are allergic to any of its ingredients. In addition to the active ingredient simvastatin, each tablet contains the following inactive ingredients: cellulose, lactose, magnesium stearate, iron oxides, talc, titanium dioxide, and starch. Butylated hydroxyanisole is added as a preservative.

Patients with liver problems: ZOCOR should not be used by patients with active liver disease or repeated blood test results indicating possible liver problems. (See WARNINGS.)

Women who are or may become pregnant: Pregnant women should not take ZOCOR because it may harm the fetus. **Women of childbearing age should not take ZOCOR unless it is highly unlikely that they will become pregnant.** If a woman does become pregnant while on ZOCOR, she should stop taking the drug and talk to her doctor at once.

Women who are breast-feeding should not take ZOCOR.

WARNINGS

Muscle: Tell your doctor right away if you experience any unexplained muscle pain, tenderness, or weakness at any time during treatment with ZOCOR so your doctor can decide if ZOCOR should be stopped. Some patients may have muscle pain or weakness while taking ZOCOR. Rarely, this can include muscle breakdown resulting in kidney damage. The risk of muscle breakdown is greater in patients taking certain other drugs along with ZOCOR:

- Cyclosporine, itraconazole, ketoconazole, erythromycin, clarithromycin, HIV protease inhibitors, the antidepressant nefazodone, or large quantities of grapefruit juice (>1 quart daily), particularly with higher doses of ZOCOR.
- Gemfibrozil particularly with higher doses of ZOCOR.
- Other lipid lowering drugs (other fibrates or ≥ 1 g/day of niacin) that can cause myopathy when given alone.
- Amiodarone or verapamil with higher doses of ZOCOR.

The risk of muscle breakdown is greater at higher doses of simvastatin.

Because the risk of muscle side effects is greater when ZOCOR is used with the products listed above, the combined use of these products should be avoided unless your doctor determines the benefits are likely to outweigh the increased risks.

The dose of ZOCOR should not exceed 10 mg daily in patients receiving gemfibrozil. The combined use of ZOCOR and gemfibrozil should be avoided, unless your doctor determines that the benefits outweigh the increased risks of muscle problems. Caution should be used when using ZOCOR with other fibrates or niacin because these can cause muscle problems when taken alone.

No more than 10 mg/day of ZOCOR should be taken with cyclosporine.

The combined use of verapamil or amiodarone with doses above ZOCOR 20 mg should be avoided unless your doctor determines the benefits outweigh the increased risk of muscle breakdown.

Your doctor should also carefully monitor for any muscle pain, tenderness, or weakness, particularly during the initial months of therapy and if the dose of either drug is increased. Your doctor also may monitor the level of certain muscle enzymes in your body, but there is no assurance that such monitoring will prevent the occurrence of severe muscle disease.

The risk of muscle breakdown is greater in patients with kidney problems or diabetes.

If you have conditions that can increase your risk of muscle breakdown, which in turn can cause kidney damage, your doctor should temporarily withhold or stop ZOCOR. Also, since there are no known adverse consequences of briefly stopping therapy with ZOCOR, treatment should be stopped a few days before elective major surgery and when any major acute medical or surgical condition occurs. Discuss this with your doctor, who can explain these conditions to you.

Liver: About 1% of patients who took ZOCOR in clinical trials developed elevated levels of some liver enzymes. Patients who had these increases usually had no symptoms. Elevated liver enzymes usually returned to normal levels when therapy with ZOCOR was stopped.

In the ZOCOR Survival Study, the number of patients with more than 1 liver enzyme level elevation to greater than 3 times the normal upper limit was no different between the ZOCOR and placebo groups. Only 8 patients on ZOCOR and 5 on placebo discontinued therapy due to elevated liver enzyme levels. Patients were started on 20 mg of ZOCOR, and one third had their dose raised to 40 mg.

Your doctor should perform routine blood tests to check these enzymes before you start treatment with ZOCOR and thereafter when clinically indicated. Patients titrated to the 80-mg dose should receive an additional test at 3 months and periodically thereafter (eg, semiannually) for the first year of treatment. If your enzyme levels increase, your doctor should order more frequent tests. If your liver enzyme levels remain unusually high, your doctor should discontinue your medication.

Tell your doctor about any liver disease you may have had in the past and about how much alcohol you consume. ZOCOR should be used with caution in patients who consume large amounts of alcohol.

PRECAUTIONS

Drug Interactions: Because of possible serious drug interactions, it is important to tell your doctor what other drugs you are taking, including those obtained without a prescription. You should also tell other doctors

who are prescribing a new medicine for you that you are taking ZOCOR® (simvastatin). ZOCOR can interact with the following:

- Itraconazole
- Ketoconazole
- Erythromycin
- Clarithromycin
- HIV protease inhibitors
- Nefazodone
- Cyclosporine
- Large quantities of grapefruit juice (>1 quart daily)

The risk of myopathy is also increased by gemfibrozil and to a lesser extent other fibrates and niacin (nicotinic acid) (≥ 1 g/day).

The risk of muscle breakdown is increased with other drugs:

- Amiodarone
- Verapamil

Some patients taking lipid-lowering agents similar to ZOCOR and coumarin anticoagulants (a type of blood thinner) have experienced bleeding and/or increased blood clotting time. Patients taking these medicines should have their blood tested before starting therapy with ZOCOR and should continue to be monitored.

Central Nervous System Toxicity; Cancer, Mutations, Impairment of Fertility: Like most prescription drugs, ZOCOR was required to be tested on animals before it was marketed for human use. Often these tests were designed to achieve higher drug concentrations than humans achieve at recommended dosing. In some tests, the animals had damage to the nerves in the central nervous system. In studies of mice with high doses of ZOCOR, the likelihood of certain types of cancerous tumors increased. No evidence of mutations or of damage to genetic material has been seen. In 1 study with ZOCOR, there was decreased fertility in male rats.

Pregnancy: Pregnant women should not take ZOCOR because it may harm the fetus.

Safety in pregnancy has not been established. In studies with lipid-lowering agents similar to ZOCOR, there have been rare reports of birth defects of the skeleton and digestive system. Therefore, women of childbearing age should not take ZOCOR unless it is highly unlikely they will become pregnant. If a woman does become pregnant while taking ZOCOR, she should stop taking the drug and talk to her doctor at once. The active ingredient of ZOCOR did not cause birth defects in rats at 3 times the human dose or in rabbits at 3 times the human dose.

Nursing Mothers: Drugs taken by nursing mothers may be present in their breast milk. Because of the potential for serious adverse reactions in nursing infants, a woman taking ZOCOR should not breast-feed. (See WHEN ZOCOR SHOULD NOT BE USED.)

Pediatric Use: ZOCOR is not recommended for children or patients under 10 years of age.

Geriatric Use: Higher blood levels of active drug were seen in elderly patients (70–78 years of age) compared with younger patients (18–30 years of age) in 1 study. In other studies, the cholesterol-lowering effects of ZOCOR were at least as great in elderly patients as in younger patients, and there were no overall differences in safety between elderly and younger patients over the 20–80 mg/day dosage range. Of the 7 cases of myopathy/rhabdomyolysis among 10,269 patients on ZOCOR in another study, 4 were aged 65 or more (at baseline), 1 of whom was over 75.

SIDE EFFECTS

Most patients tolerate treatment with ZOCOR well; however, like all prescription drugs, ZOCOR can cause side effects, and some of them can be serious. Side effects that do occur are usually mild and short-lived. Only your doctor can weigh the risks versus the benefits of any prescription drug. In clinical studies with ZOCOR, less than 1.5% of patients dropped out of the studies because of side effects. In 2 large, 5-year studies, patients taking ZOCOR experienced similar side effects to those patients taking placebo (sugar pills). Some of the side effects that have been reported with ZOCOR or related drugs are listed below. This list is not complete. Be sure to ask your doctor about side effects before taking ZOCOR and to discuss any side effects that occur.

Digestive System: Constipation, diarrhea, upset stomach, gas, heartburn, stomach pain/cramps, anorexia, loss of appetite, nausea, inflammation of the pancreas, hepatitis, jaundice, fatty changes in the liver, and, rarely, severe liver damage and failure, cirrhosis, and liver cancer.

Muscle, Skeletal: Muscle cramps, aches, pain, and weakness; joint pain; muscle breakdown.

Nervous System: Dizziness, headache, insomnia, tingling, memory loss, damage to nerves causing weakness and/or loss of sensation and/or abnormal sensations, anxiety, depression, tremor, loss of balance, psychic disturbances.

Skin: Rash, itching, hair loss, dryness, nodules, discoloration.

Eye/Senses: Blurred vision, altered taste sensation, progression of cataracts, eye muscle weakness.

Hypersensitivity (Allergic) Reactions: On rare occasions, a wide variety of symptoms have been reported to occur either alone or together in groups (referred to as a syndrome) that appeared to be based on allergic-type reactions, which may rarely be fatal. These have included 1 or more of the following: a severe generalized reaction that may include shortness of breath, wheezing, digestive symptoms, and low blood pressure and even shock; an allergic reaction with swelling of the face, lips, tongue, and/or throat with difficulty swallowing or breathing; symptoms mimicking lupus (a disorder in which a person's immune system may attack parts of his or her own body); severe muscle and blood vessel inflammation, sometimes including rash; bruises; various disorders of blood cells (that could result in anemia, infection, or blood clotting problems) or abnormal blood tests; inflamed or painful joints; hives; fatigue and weakness; sensitivity to sunlight; fever, chills; flushing; difficulty breathing; and severe skin disorders that vary from rash to a serious burn-like shedding of skin all over the body, including mucous membranes such as the lining of the mouth.

Other: Loss of sexual desire, breast enlargement, impotence.

Laboratory Tests: Liver function test abnormalities including elevated alkaline phosphatase and bilirubin; thyroid function abnormalities.

NOTE: This summary provides important information about ZOCOR. If you would like more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist to let you read the prescribing information and then discuss it with them.



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"The implications of this are really frightening for U.S. policy," Andrew Peterson, a young legal scholar who lived in Taiwan during the 2000 election, observes. In a recent article in *The Washington Quarterly*, Peterson spins out a scenario of brinkmanship by Taiwan. Chen is unlikely to make an outright declaration of independence. But if a legislative majority frees his hand and Washington can't rein him in, Chen may take provocative steps toward more aggressively asserting independence. Peterson outlines a variety of possibilities; many observers think the most likely first step would be a popular referendum to add the word "Taiwan" in parentheses to the island's outdated official name, Republic of China. Aware that this seemingly innocuous change, or one like it, could constitute a *casus belli* for Beijing, Taiwan's pro-independence forces are,

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HOLIDAY CHEER

The world's most bibulous countries

Each year the holidays promise friends, family, food—and often a rigorous drinking regimen. But although Americans may be geared toward heavy consumption, our counterparts abroad appear to be doing more sodden celebrating. According to World Drink Trends 2004, published by Britain's World Advertising Research Center, the United States ranks just twenty-sixth among forty-five countries in per capita alcohol consumption. Here slow and steady wins the race: big beer- and wine-drinking countries generally imbibe more alcohol per capita than countries that favor liquor. Russians drink more spirits than any other nationality—the equivalent of one 80-proof shot a day for every citizen. But Russia ranks only fifteenth in overall drinking. Americans on average throw back twenty-two gallons of beer a year, but the United States lags in wine and liquor consumption. Here's how you'd have to pace yourself to keep up with the world's heaviest drinkers. —NATHAN LITTLEFIELD



RANK	COUNTRY	ANNUAL INTAKE OF PURE ALCOHOL PER PERSON	DRINKS PER WEEK, ROUGHLY*
1	Luxembourg	3.14 gallons	
2	Hungary	2.93 gallons	
3	Czech Republic	2.85 gallons	
4	Ireland	2.85 gallons	
5	Germany	2.75 gallons	
6	France	2.72 gallons	
7	Portugal	2.56 gallons	
8	Spain	2.54 gallons	
9	Great Britain	2.54 gallons	
10	Denmark	2.51 gallons	

 = 1.5-ounce shot of 80-proof alcohol
  = pint of beer
  = 4-ounce glass of wine

*Alcohol content of beer and wine varies from country to country

Peterson thinks, poised to act quickly. They believe that the military balance of power still favors their protector, the United States, and that Beijing will feel constrained by international opinion until after the 2008 Olympics. In other words, Taiwan is willing to gamble, because it sees its window of opportunity closing.

But so does China. "The Chinese Communist Party is acutely aware of what's going on in Taiwan," Peterson says. "And I don't think they have any effective policy means to deal with it."

Thomas Christensen agrees. "China has tried to use economic integration as a tool to change the minds of the Taiwan public," he says, "but that strategy has largely failed. Politically, Taiwan is getting further away, not closer."

Since 1949 China's leaders have often resorted to pre-emptive military strikes to halt trends not in the country's favor. Christensen ticks off the examples: in 1950 in Korea, in 1954 and 1958 in the Taiwan Strait, in 1962 against India, in 1969 against the Soviet Union, and in 1979 against Vietnam.

For the United States, deterring China from an outright invasion of Taiwan is straightforward. A Pentagon report earlier this year concluded that China would have great difficulty mounting an amphibious assault on the island any time in the next five years. But invading Taiwan is probably not China's goal. "The conflict isn't about territorial acquisition, it's about political identity," Christensen says. "That means China's leaders might think they can achieve their goals through coercion instead of invasion. As a result, the threshold for using force could be much lower." With limited military action China could pursue a different and more modest goal—for example, compelling Taiwan to agree simply to the *idea* of reunification, to be implemented at some distant date in the future.

Suppose Taiwan did change its name to "Republic of China (Taiwan)," and Beijing responded with force—what form would the attack take? Most observers

a blockade would create a critical difficulty for Washington. In the absence of an unambiguous missile barrage or invasion, an American President might have a harder time rallying support; the naval response required to neutralize the fifty or sixty submarines China could field around Taiwan would be vast and risky—especially if U.S. forces are still stretched thin in the Middle East. China could capitalize on nervousness in Taiwan and offer generous terms to end the confrontation. "Because this is a highly symbolic political issue," Goldstein told me, "China's demands are likely to be flexible." A simple promise by Taiwan to accept a vague version of the one-China principle might be sufficient to allow Beijing to claim victory.

But if Taiwan refused to negotiate, and the United States sought to defend the island, it would be facing a nuclear power; and even China's conventional diesel submarines would pose a threat.

America's sub-hunting capabilities have atrophied since the Cold War, and although the Navy has begun to rebuild them, Goldstein and Murray aren't optimistic. The U.S. nuclear-powered

sub fleet no longer operates diesel submarines even for training purposes, and there is evidence that U.S. commanders may be losing some of the skills required to combat these maneuverable and very quiet vessels. During war games last year the U.S. Pacific Fleet was taken by surprise when an Australian diesel submarine managed to "kill" a U.S. nuclear attack sub.

Moreover, China's submarines would be operating close to home, in shallow and complex waters that could put the larger U.S. subs at a disadvantage. Chinese hydrological-mapping vessels have been a frequent presence in the waters around Taiwan in recent years, prompting speculation that the Chinese navy is studying exactly where to hide its submarines in the event of a conflict. The "geography of the scenario," as Goldstein puts it, "allows an [inferior] submarine force to do some major damage."

American intervention against a Chinese blockade "could be a tremendous strategic, tactical, or operational disaster," Murray says. "Take your pick."

Soon after taking office, in 2001, President Bush announced that the United States would do "whatever it takes" to defend Taiwan. But would America actually be willing to sacrifice lives, submarines, and ships just so that Taiwan could add a word in parentheses to its name?

For decades the United States has balanced its Taiwan policy on a contradiction: support for Taiwan and its nascent democracy on the one hand, suppression of the island's national ambitions in order to please Beijing on the other. So far Washington has managed to deliver the right combination of deterrence and reassurance to both parties. But Taiwan's drive to secure legal independence puts the United States in an increasingly impossible position.

The fact that Taiwan has matured into a prosperous democracy suggests a solution, albeit a radical one: let the island defend itself. In 1998 a Cato Institute analysis proposed that the United States withdraw its pledge to protect Taiwan; in exchange it would lift all restrictions on arms sales, allowing Taiwan to buy the weapons necessary to deter a Chinese attack. This course would require delicate diplomacy, because it would infuriate both Taiwan and China: Taiwan would lose its security guarantee, and China would face a new Taiwanese arms buildup.

Bereft of American protection, however, Taiwan would be forced to face the consequences of upsetting the status quo. The immediate result would be a dramatic reduction in China's political fears, thus removing the incentive for a pre-emptive strike and buying both sides some time to move toward a peaceful solution. For Taiwan and its supporters in Washington, the idea may sound like a betrayal. But the best way to help Taiwan mature into a full-fledged democracy might simply be to ask its people to take responsibility for their actions. ▀

Trevor Corson writes frequently on East Asia.

A number of analysts in both America and East Asia believe that military conflict between China and Taiwan is not only likely but imminent.

focus on the missiles China has amassed across the strait. But there is another, less visible threat: submarines.

China's submarine fleet has suffered a number of serious accidents over the years, leading many analysts to dismiss the program as inept. But two experts at the U.S. Naval War College—Lyle Goldstein, a specialist in security studies, and William Murray, a research analyst and a former submarine officer in the U.S. Navy—report that China is pouring resources into the fleet, and could launch an undersea blockade that would cut off Taiwan's lifelines. "Taiwan imports almost every bit of energy it uses," Murray told me recently, "and those ships would be relatively easy to identify and force to turn around or, if they didn't, to sink."

Goldstein and Murray don't doubt that the U.S. Navy could ultimately break a submarine blockade. But such

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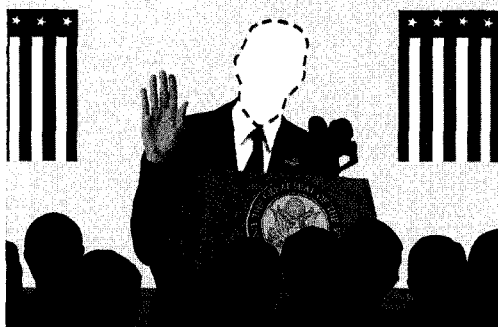
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HAIL TO THE —

BY P. J. O'ROURKE

An all-purpose post-election editorial, offered free to news organizations across the United States



The people have spoken, choosing to [blank] the course of American [blank]. We see from the [blank] size of the electoral margin that the people have spoken [blank]ly. It is up to you, [blank] [blank], to navigate these [blank] but [blank] waters with [blank]fullness. Remember, the voters, though often [blank]istic and sometimes [blank]ious, are ever un-[blank] in their [blank]ism.

A President's [blank] term in office is the measure of his mettle. Only then does a chief executive have the [blank] to [blank] without undue partisan [blank]. Therefore this is the time to re-[blank] our commitment in Iraq, re-[blank] our international alliances, and re-[blank] the threat of [blank], [blank], [blank], [blank], [blank], and [blank].

On the domestic front you've vowed to expand [blank], improve [blank], strengthen [blank], and broaden America's access to [blank]. We [blank] that these [blank] objectives [blank] be [blank]ed without sacrificing [blank]. It will be your job to balance [blank] and [blank], giving full weight to [blank], while never losing sight of [blank]. There is no other way to provide America with the [blank] it so [blank]ly requires.

Although we [blank]ed your candidacy, we believe that, even as your [blank]s, we have the duty to [blank] you when necessary. This is the American [blank]. Likewise it is the American [blank] to seek a leader who will [blank] when the storm of [blank] requires a [blank] hand on the [blank]. As you so [blank]ly said in your victory speech, "America is [blank]." We could not agree more.

POLITICS

Executive Assistance

The split between "red" states and "blue" states has never been wider, but one type of candidate is bridging that gap: businessmen

BY ALEXANDRA STARR

In a year when politics seems to be viewed strictly in terms of the red state-blue state divide, a candidate like Brian Schweitzer tends to escape notice. Schweitzer, a cherubic-looking forty-nine-year-old, is a rancher who has never held elective office and yet at the time of this writing was favored to become the next governor of Montana. His success is due in no small part to the way he has leveraged his business background, frequently citing his experience "signing the front side of a paycheck" as ideal training for the governorship. He stressed this theme in his first campaign ad, titled "Businessmen," in which he introduced himself as a rancher, vowed to challenge every state expense, and touted his penchant for soliciting ideas, even from political opponents. The spot omits the more colorful details of Schweitzer's career as an "agricultural entrepreneur": he has helped manage a dairy farm in Saudi Arabia, grown mint and soybeans, and exported such venerable Montana commodities as cow embryos and bull semen. Although he hasn't been shy about detailing his quirky résumé, Schweitzer stresses the nuts and bolts of running an enterprise to make a case for his candidacy. "Business is all about managing people and resources," he told me recently. "I think those skills transfer to government." Evidently, many voters agree. They've made him the rare example of a Democrat who is faring well in a solidly pro-Bush state.

If he wins, Schweitzer will become just the latest business chieftain elected governor of a state generally hostile to his party. This trend applies to Republicans as well as Democrats. In the past few years the "red" candidates Mitt Romney and Donald Carcieri have prevailed in the "blue" states of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, respectively, as has the blue Mark Warner in the red state of

Virginia. Also this year New Hampshire Governor Craig Benson—a Republican business tycoon, elected in 2002—faces a strong challenge from the Democrat John Lynch, formerly the CEO of an office-furniture company. None of these men had previously held political office. But each has accomplished what increasingly seems to be beyond the reach of even the most veteran politicians. In a political atmosphere riven by partisanship, these CEO candidates have managed to bridge the divide.

With the outcome of this presidential election all but certain to boost animosity on both sides of the aisle, candidates like Schweitzer offer a glimmer of hope that there may be *some* respite from the endless bickering. The lesson of his campaign and others like it seems to be that when it comes to elected officials, voters prefer business to business as usual.

The attractiveness of business leaders as politicians isn't new. The Democratic governors Milton Shapp, of Pennsylvania, and Averell Harriman, of New York, each traded an executive office for the executive branch. Mitt Romney's father, George, left the helm of American Motors to become the governor of Michigan. H. Ross Perot leveraged his business experience (and fortune) to make a serious run at the White House.

But today's businessmen have a deeper appeal both for voters and for political parties. The most obvious draw is a promise of financial proficiency and administrative expertise, which voters can often be persuaded is lacking in career politicians. "If there is an advantage to a business background, it's the familiarity with finance and the economy," says Mitt Romney, a star leveraged-buyout investor who engineered the turnaround of the scandal-plagued 2002 Winter Olympics before running for governor later



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WHO'S THE GAY SIMPSON?

Network television has a history of cliffhangers dating back at least as far as 1980, when fans of *Dallas* were frantic to know who shot J.R. A quarter century later tastes have changed, but reinvigorating a popular series with a dramatic revelation remains a television staple. This summer Matt Groening, the creator of *The Simpsons*, announced that during the upcoming season a familiar character would come out of the closet. This sparked a frenzy at the Irish betting site PaddyPower.com, which offered odds on a list of popular *Simpsons* characters. Perhaps predictably, Waylon Smithers—the prissy, doll-collecting assistant to the nuclear-power-plant mogul Montgomery Burns—started off at the front of the pack. But punters soon began placing so much money on Marge Simpson's sister Patty that in early September the site stopped taking bets. Later that month *The Sun*, a British tabloid, reported (based on "early scripts") that she is indeed the one who will be outed. But the show's producers aren't confirming this. Fans will discover in January if *The Sun* was right and Patty's spinsterhood is due to more than her raspy voice, incessant smoking, and plentiful body hair. When the betting was stopped, these were some of the odds on which *Simpsons* regular would turn out to be gay. —NATHAN LITTLEFIELD

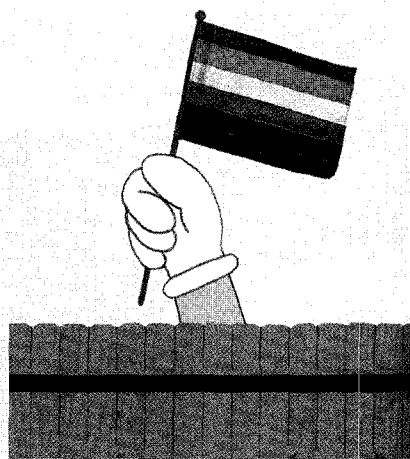
11:1 Patty. Aside from a doomed fling with Principal Skinner, Marge's sister has never dated a man.

11:4 Waylon Smithers. Longish odds for gay-seeming lackey reflect confusion over whether or not he is already "out."

7:1 Selma. Shares her sister Patty's grooming and lifestyle habits, but has had a string of failed relationships, including one with B-movie star Troy McClure.

7:1 Bartender Moe. Contribution to mixology is a drink called the "Flaming Moe."

10:1 Groundskeeper Willy. Single, buff, wears kilts with no underwear. And it's unclear why he left Scotland.



10:1 Lenny. Lenny and his buddy Carl are more inseparable than Siegfried & Roy. Coincidence?

10:1 Carl. See "Lenny."

16:1 Barney. The town drunk has cross-dressed more often than Nathan Lane. Does his drinking mask a secret?

20:1 Ned Flanders. Fondness for pink shirts and for remarking "Hi-dilly-ho, neighbor!" uncharacteristic of heterosexual men.

20:1 Reverend Lovejoy. He's a clergyman who never mentions Leviticus. It's surprising that the odds are this long.

20:1 Krusty the Clown. Suspected of fraternizing with a transvestite.

20:1 Principal Skinner. Middle-aged, lives with his mother ... Hello?

20:1 Old Sea Captain. Has said several times that he's completely straight ... on land.

20:1 Comic Book Guy. Gay? Dressed like that? Are you kidding?

25:1 Apu. Kwik-E-Mart owner spends long hours away from his wife and children.

33:1 Chief Wiggum. Has remarked that he would date Ned Flanders "in a second" if he were gay.

33:1 Montgomery Burns. Smithers must see something in him.

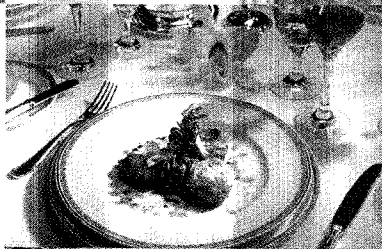
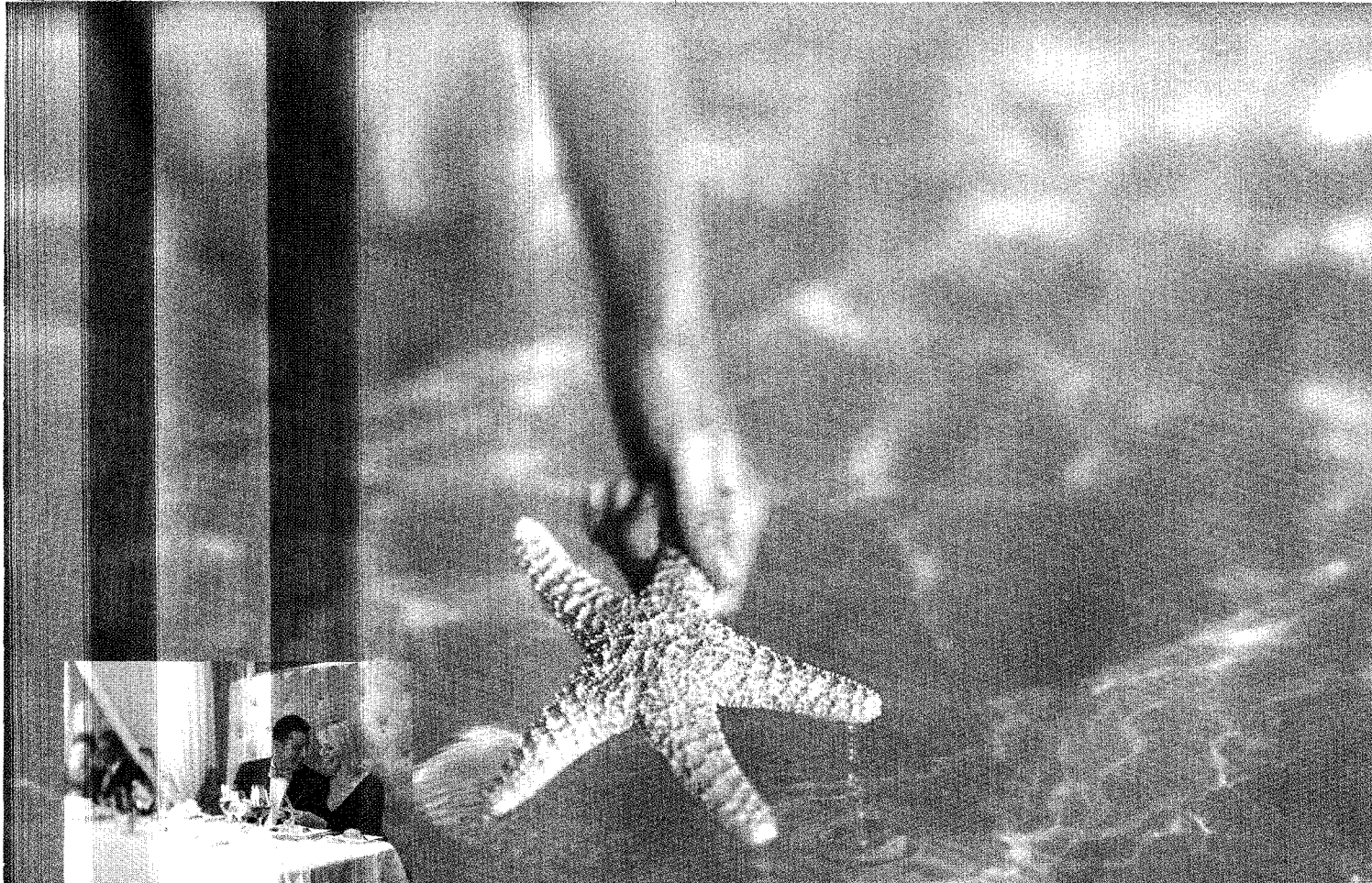
33:1 Duff Man. This beer mascot is a symbol of jockish virility, but would provide a spectacular coming-out line: "New feelings ... brewing ... in ... Duff Man! Oh, yeah!"

66:1 Homer Simpson. Once remarked, "I like my beer cold, my TV loud, and my homosexuals flaming!"

that year. "It gives a credibility that is particularly helpful in tough economic times." It's probably no accident that the most recent class of CEO governors was elected in 2002, when the country was suffering through a recession. Nor was it coincidental that Carcieri, the former co-director of a large conglomerate, campaigned by asking prospective constituents to consider him their "chief economic-development officer."

Particularly for beleaguered voters in states suffering an economic downturn, the business-first, no-nonsense intensity personified by a figure like Craig Benson can be welcome. Before he was elected, Benson earned some half a billion dollars; as a tech entrepreneur he co-founded the computer-systems company Cabletron in a garage and nurtured it into one of New Hampshire's largest corporations. As CEO, Benson fostered an aggressive culture. A top executive at his company donned combat fatigues and thrust knives into basketballs to demonstrate the damage he intended to wreak on competitors. For efficiency's sake, meetings were limited to fifteen minutes and held at elbow-high tables without chairs. Critics of the governor point out that Cabletron has floundered since the end of the tech boom, splitting into four units, one of which became the subject of an SEC investigation. Benson has nevertheless brought many of the company's practices with him, including some that must delight those habitually displeased with the bureaucratic stasis that typifies most state governments. Department heads tardy for the 8:00 A.M. weekly meeting—again, conducted standing around a table—are literally locked out of the room.

Business leaders can position themselves not only as rainmakers but also as green-eyeshaders whose thrift will stretch the public's tax dollars further. Schweitzer is fond of remarking that "a small businessman knows how to squeeze a penny till you get copper wire." In fact, all the recently elected governors in this category have quickly delivered on their campaign pledges to audit state expenditures. Schweitzer believes that the voters' desire for fiscally responsible leaders even caused



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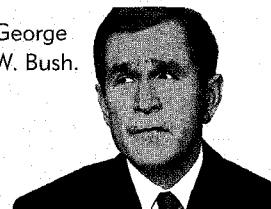
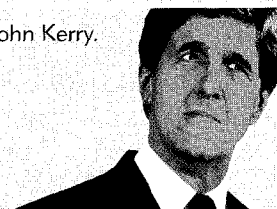
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A SPECTATOR'S GUIDE TO THE POLITICAL-ACTION UNIVERSE

New campaign laws have given independent 527 groups enormous influence. BYRON YORK vets some of the biggest

	MOVEON.ORG	SWIFT BOAT VETERANS FOR TRUTH	AMERICA COMING TOGETHER/THE MEDIA FUND	PROGRESS FOR AMERICA VOTER FUND
GUIDING LIGHTS	The Berkeley-based husband-and-wife software designers Wes Boyd and Joan Blades, creators of the famed "Flying Toasters" screen saver, who in 1998 founded "Censure and Move On," an Internet-based campaign to stop the Clinton impeachment—which later morphed into MoveOn.	John O'Neill, who took over John Kerry's Swift boat when Kerry left Vietnam. Later opposed Kerry's antiwar efforts and was recruited by Nixon White House aide Charles Colson to lead Nixon's anti-Kerry effort. Still going ...	The heavy hitters of street-level Democratic politics: Ellen Malcolm, head of Emily's List; Steve Rosenthal, former political director of the AFL-CIO; and Harold Ickes, former top Clinton aide and veteran of hardball New York campaigning.	Republicans who didn't see the value of 527s until it was almost too late. Founded in May, Progress for America is led by Republican strategist Brian McCabe. Board members include former Bush I White House counsel C. Boyden Gray and Bush fundraiser Marilyn Ware.
IDEALISTIC SELF-IMAGE vs. STARK REALITY	Web site says, "MoveOn.org is an issue-oriented, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization." Financial statement says that to date MoveOn has given 100 percent of its money to Democrats or Democratic causes.	"Swift Boat Veterans for Truth is a non-partisan organization," claims the group's Web site. But also: "Swift Boat Veterans for Truth, Inc., is a 527 advocacy organization and contributions are not tax deductible."	ACT/The Media Fund eschews pious talk of nonpartisanship. It's here for one reason: to beat George W. Bush. And ACT has created perhaps the world's biggest get-out-the-vote operation to do it. The Media Fund handles the television advertising.	Image: Scourge of Soros. "For too long, liberal 527 committees, bankrolled by extremists like George Soros, have been able to say scurrilous things about President Bush," McCabe says. Reality: More of the same, just from the other side.
SUGAR DADDIES	MoveOn's 527 raised \$4,799,433 in 2003 and has raised \$7,276,519 so far in 2004. Top donors are financier George Soros (\$2.6 million), Progressive Insurance chairman Peter Lewis (\$2.5 million), and Golden West co-chairs Herb and Marion Sandler (\$2.5 million).	Largest donors are billionaire investor Harold Simmons (\$3 million), Bush "Ranger" Bob Perry (\$1,550,000), and Texas oilman T. Boone Pickens (\$1.5 million). The Wyly brothers of Texas, notorious for anti-McCain ads in 2000, have put in \$10,000 each.	ACT raised \$12,515,000 in 2003 and has raised \$38,530,621 so far in 2004. Its biggest donors are Soros (\$7.5 million) and Lewis (\$2,995,000). The Media Fund raised \$3 million in 2003 and has raised \$43,550,183 in 2004. Biggest donors are Soros and AFSCME (\$2 million each).	Ameriquet Capital co-chair Dawn Arnall and San Diego Chargers owner Alex Spanos gave \$5 million each.
WHO BENEFITS?	John Kerry and media-buying agencies. Most expenditures pay for anti-Bush ads.	George W. Bush. The SwiftVets spend nearly all their money airing anti-Kerry television ads, focusing—in a nonpartisan fashion, of course—on swing states.	John Kerry.	George W. Bush.
FAMOUS FOR ...	An updated version of the infamous 1964 anti-Goldwater TV ad "Daisy," suggesting that Bush's policies might lead to nuclear war. Also held a contest for best anti-Bush ad; had to disavow two entries likening Bush to Adolf Hitler.	Bang for the buck. Putting aside issues of truth and fairness (and what political strategist hasn't?), SwiftVets spent less money and had more influence than any other major 527. And that's not counting O'Neill's anti-Kerry <i>Unfit for Command</i> , which topped the <i>New York Times</i> best-seller list.	Single-minded focus. And collaborating with MoveOn to present the Bruce Springsteen-led "Vote for Change" concerts. And Will Ferrell's infamous video on the ACT Web site—like a bad <i>Saturday Night Live</i> skit, only longer.	Believing Republican lawyers who convinced party bigwigs that 527s would be outlawed, that Democrats would be out in the cold, and that Republicans would be really smart to do nothing while America Coming Together raked in millions. Oops!



AFSCME & SEIU

Labor unions. MoveOn and Swift Boat Veterans for Truth get all the attention, but the biggest 527 belongs to the country's most politically active labor union, the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). The Service Employees International Union (SEIU) isn't far behind.

AFSCME's Web site says, "Do my [union] dues pay for contributions to political candidates? No." The real world says sure they do—just not directly. So long as they don't run afoul of election laws, unions can and do support specific candidates in specific races—nearly all of them Democrats, of course.

Unions create 527s and then give them money. AFSCME has two 527s, to which it has given a total of \$51,075,630. SEIU has given \$40,436,263 to its three 527s.

Democrats. AFSCME's 527s have given \$5,885,000 to the Democratic National Committee, for instance. SEIU gave \$1.1 million to fight California Governor Gray Davis's recall and another million to The Media Fund.

Stealthy presence: most of AFSCME's 527 money is spread in relatively small amounts among hundreds of union locals. Despite the big contributions to national Democratic causes, most of it goes to state and local races. SEIU operates in much the same way.

an attack against him to backfire. This summer an opponent assailed him for buying trucks for his ranch from over the border in Idaho rather than showing loyalty to his economically ailing home state. "Only a lifelong government guy would think comparison shopping is a terrible thing," Schweitzer retorted.

The state parties backing CEO types are often drawn by the way the candidates' success can direct attention to the economic concerns that are their strong suit and away from treacherous social issues. This is particularly important for those who, like Schweitzer, belong to a party whose views the majority of their state's voters don't share—and sometimes emphatically repudiate—when it comes to hot-button issues such as gun control and abortion. And the fact that they can cut large checks to pay for their own campaigns is also a decided plus. What in an earlier era might have been viewed as a handicap—that they have never held elective office—is, paradoxically, turning out to be an advantage: because they are not associated in voters' minds with the overt partisanship of most politicians, they can project an above-the-fray stance that has found considerable favor in red and blue states alike.

Indeed, most sitting CEO governors garner high approval ratings. Perhaps that's not surprising: although they often run as business managers who almost stumbled into campaigning, many display a politician's deft touch with voters. "A lot of the CEOs are wonderful politicians," says Darrell West, a professor of political science at Brown University. "But they aren't seen as politicians, which gives them more credibility."

Though corporate leadership skills may be an effective credential with voters, they don't offer much preparation for tangling with state legislators. Romney provoked the enmity of his state's Democratic legislative leaders when, according to one lawmaker, he declared himself the "CEO of Massachusetts" at their inaugural meeting. "He's chosen to put himself over them," says Jeffrey Berry, a professor of political science at Tufts University. "As a result, they don't have much of a working relationship,

and he doesn't have [the Republican former governor Bill] Weld's record of dynamic achievement." In Rhode Island, Carcieri saw the legislature override his veto of the 2005 budget. "Everything gets so politicized," he laments. "I assumed there would be more give-and-take." Perhaps mindful of such pitfalls, Schweitzer tapped a Republican—and former small businessman—to serve as his running mate and, if he wins, as a de facto emissary to Montana's Republican-controlled legislature. "I don't need to have the legislators in Helena embarrassing me," he explained. "We've got to work together."

Despite these difficulties, most businessmen have managed to govern effectively. And though they may position themselves as open-minded innovators immune from traditional ideological pigeonholing, once in office most have pursued typically partisan agendas. Romney and Carcieri actively recruited candidates to challenge incumbents in their Democratic-majority state legislatures. Benson signed into law a parental-notification requirement for minors seeking abortions. In Virginia, Mark Warner engineered a tax hike to stave off budget cuts. All these acts reflect policies favored by the governors' political parties. In other words, despite their cross-party appeal, CEO candidates govern very much like their predecessors. They don't spend millions of dollars and endure the indignities of campaigning just to be technocrats.

There's reason to expect that more businessmen will enter national politics. George W. Bush may have been the first M.B.A. President, but he most likely won't be the last. Harriman, Shapp, and the elder Romney all ran for the White House. Given the success and ambition of popular young governors like Warner and Mitt Romney, and their ability to win in hostile territory, it seems only a matter of time before one of them seeks the presidency. Because a major realignment of voters to one party or the other doesn't appear likely, and they have a history of bridging partisanship at the state level, seeking the top job would, after all, make good business sense. ■

Alexandra Starr is the Capitol Hill correspondent for BusinessWeek.

Pork With a Point

The highway bill—a translation

BY P. J. O'ROURKE

President Bush has proposed a whopping \$256 billion six-year transportation bill. The House passed a \$275 billion appropriation with only sixty-five “nay” votes. The Senate, by a three-to-one ratio, approved its own \$318 billion version. There’d be money for roads, rails, bus stops, bike boulevards, jogging esplanades, Segway cloverleaf interchanges, unicycle-only express lanes, whatever. For once the government would accomplish something concrete, as it were. Everyone loved the bill, which was known as the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act, or SAFETEA. (What fun just naming it.) And yet SAFETEA couldn’t muster enough speed to get past the House-Senate legislative conference, and ended up stalled behind the threat of a presidential veto, because everybody also hated it.

Well-informed opinion-makers, which is to say *The New York Times*, published an article about the bill: “BUILT WITH STEEL, PERHAPS, BUT GREASED WITH PORK.” It seems that the House Transportation and Infrastructure chairman, Don Young (R., Alaska), would get his state \$200 million for a mile-long bridge linking Ketchikan (pop. 7,845) with its airport (six flights a day). A five-minute ferry ride would be avoided.

The conservative Heritage Foundation objected to the diversion of funds from superhighways to social byways. Public transit, Heritage says, serves only two percent of the public. And a plurality of those straphangers are—to be blunt—from the New York area. But one out of five SAFETEA dollars would go to public transit.

The nature-loving Sierra Club protested that four out of five SAFETEA dollars would go to roads, many of them running right through nature.

States with a lot of nature and hence a lot of driving took issue with

SAFETEA’s distribution of federal-fuel-tax proceeds. Texas would get back less than it paid in taxes; Connecticut would get back more. The states have an idea: Give each state slightly more than the others.

Congress is mad because SAFETEA is too small. Don Young originally wanted a \$375 billion bill. And President Bush is mad because SAFETEA is too big. He says he’ll refuse to sign anything over \$256 billion, which is still \$32 billion more than the fuel tax is expected to provide to the supposedly self-financing Highway Trust Fund. (The President is suddenly worried about deficits.)

Everybody is—as complex legislation usually makes people—wrong.

Local-project funding for influential legislators, or “pork,” is only about four percent of the transportation bill. And not all pork is as pointless as the Ketchikan bridge. Bringing nothing home to constituents is death to politicians. We don’t want government by suicide.

Pork is the price of deciding transportation issues politically. And transportation issues are so politicized—think new turnpike through your patio—that only politics will do. It may sound like free-market sense when the Heritage Foundation says that light rail costs four times as much as automobiles per passenger-mile. But voters like trains. In a recent AP poll 51 percent of respondents favored giving priority to government spending on public transit (although almost 90 percent said they drove to work).

I talked to a lobbyist for highway builders. “Any project,” he said, “needs political offsets—ten percent to twenty percent to environmentalists.” He called it “green pork.”

Those who order the green pork should offer some political offsets of their own. Don’t be too anti-car and anti-truck in a country where 90 percent of travel is by car, 64 percent of freight is trucked, and roads occupy only half of one percent of the land area.

Even a political journalist must confess that politics has a good driving record. When the federal government completed its first national road survey, in 1904, just 141 miles of pavement existed outside cities. Today there are 3.9 million miles of it, almost all politically funded.

But not funded well enough. Since 1982 the U.S. population has grown by 24 percent. Vehicle-miles traveled per year have increased by 75 percent, while road capacity has become only six percent greater. According to the Department of Transportation, traffic congestion now affects a third of all travel on major roads. Meanwhile, the federal fuel tax—18.4 cents a gallon—hasn’t been raised since 1993.

The situation is bad enough that actual taxpayers are willing to pay more taxes. In a 2003 Zogby poll 67 percent of likely voters (Bush voters presumably included) said they’d pay a little more gas tax if the money went to transportation. Don Young, a big spender who should know, thinks a nickel-a-gallon tax increase would do it.

Even if we build garden paths to lead the innocent down instead of roads, we need money. The DOT says that 18 percent of federal highways are in “poor” or “mediocre” condition, and that 29 percent of U.S. bridges are “structurally deficient” or “functionally obsolete.” (I don’t know what these classifications mean, and don’t want to find out while crossing the Golden Gate.) The DOT estimates that \$71.9 billion a year (meaning a \$431.4 billion six-year transportation bill) is required to “begin making significant improvement to the system.”

SAFETEA is a bad bill. We need a worse one. ▀

P.J. O’Rourke is a correspondent for The Atlantic. His most recent book is Peace Kills.



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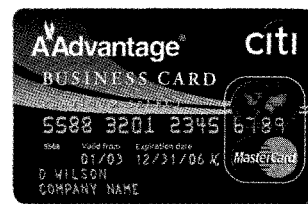
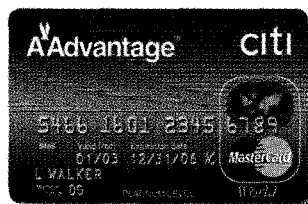


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Primary Sources

Federal marshals behaving badly; the relationship between terrorism and bad driving; the surprisingly high divorce rate among born-again Christians

NATIONAL SECURITY Heads in the Sand

The first casualty of battle is the battle plan—or so goes a military maxim. And a new study suggests that the first casualty in a terrorist attack on an American city would be the civil-defense plan. Researchers at the New York Academy of Medicine told 2,545 randomly selected adults what they *should* do in the event of a terrorist-induced smallpox outbreak (go immediately to a vaccination center) or the detonation of a terrorist-delivered dirty nuclear weapon (find and remain inside an undamaged building). Then the researchers asked those people what they actually *would* do—with disquieting results. Only two fifths of the respondents said that they would follow instructions and go to a vaccination center; the remainder said that fears of vaccine side effects, and worry that they would contract smallpox amid the large crowds at a vaccination center, would keep them away. (Concern about side effects isn't unreasonable, since about 50 million Americans run the risk of serious complications from the smallpox vaccine.) Meanwhile, three fifths of the respondents said that in the event of a dirty-bomb attack they would follow instructions and remain in a building other than their home. Many said that unless they were able to verify that their loved ones were safe, they would leave the building

to protect their families—an understandable urge, of course, but one that would expose them to a serious risk of radiation poisoning.

—“Redefining Readiness: Terrorism Planning Through the Eyes of the Public,” New York Academy of Medicine

Who Marshals the Marshals?

In the aftermath of 9/11 one step toward increased security seemed a no-brainer: more money and manpower for the Federal Air Marshal Service. And sure enough, the United States has dramatically expanded its force of marshals and increased the air-marshall budget more than a hundredfold, from \$4.4 million in 2001 to \$545 million in 2003. How much safer this makes you feel probably depends on whether you've leafed through a recent report from the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security, which evaluated recent air-marshall hiring practices and conduct records. The report examined a review of 504 job applicants, all of whom had been approved and were scheduled to receive an offer of employment, and found that 161 had incidents in their records that should have raised a red flag (including misuse of government resources, and allegations of domestic abuse, drunk driving, or sexual harassment). With this in mind, it's hardly surprising to learn that from February of 2002 to October

of 2003 there were 753 documented reports of misconduct by air marshals on duty. Among the improprieties: falling asleep, testing positive for drugs or alcohol, and having a weapon lost or stolen.

—“Evaluation of the Federal Air Marshal Service,” Office of Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security

Terror on the Road

Terrorism strikes fear into society, but how, exactly, does that fear manifest itself? Perhaps in reckless driving. According to a team of researchers from Princeton University and Hebrew University, in Jerusalem, who analyzed Israeli traffic-accident

data from an eighteen-month period, the number of fatal traffic accidents increased by 35 percent on the third day following an attack by Palestinian militants (and only on the third day; the effect disappears thereafter). The reason for this spike is unclear, since traffic volume diminishes in the days following a terrorist attack. Perhaps, the authors suggest, it's on the third day that many people attempt to resume their normal activities, even though they haven't psychologically recovered from the trauma. The most intriguing possibility, however, is suggested by a phenomenon known as

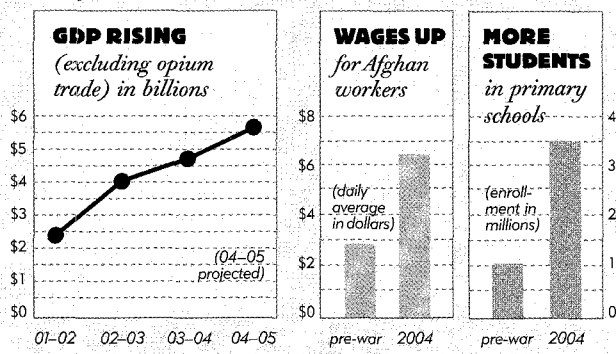
FOREIGN AFFAIRS

A Post-Taliban Snapshot

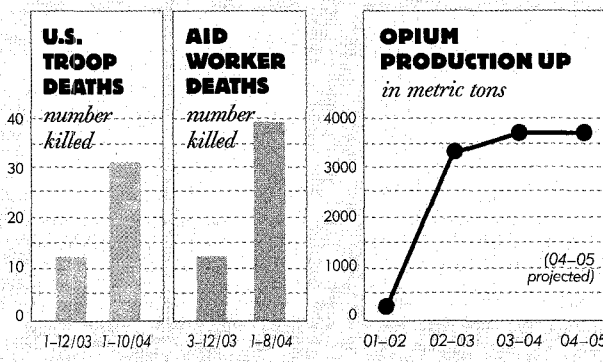
The Brookings Institution's “Afghanistan Index” tracks the status of that country according to a variety of statistical measures. Current trends reveal an interesting combination of positive and negative indicators. The most alarming news? The Taliban is 50 percent stronger today than it was last year.

—“Afghanistan Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction & Security in Post-Taliban Afghanistan,” Brookings Institution

Some good news ...



... and some bad

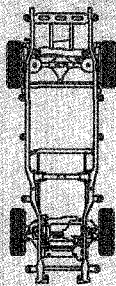


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"imitative suicide," in which prominent suicides are succeeded three days later by a rash of traffic fatalities. If the Israeli traffic accidents are not accidents at all but covert suicides, this would explain why on the third day only fatal accidents spike, whereas the rate of merely "serious" accidents holds steady.

—"Terror Attacks Influence Driving Behavior in Israel," Guy Stecklov and Joshua Goldstein, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences

SOCIETY

Whom God Has Joined Together...

There are some difficult-to-interpret rules in the Bible, but the New Testament prohibition of divorce for any reason other than adultery isn't among them. So one might think that Christians, and especially "born-again" Christians, would make an extra effort to keep their marriages intact. But according to a recent nationwide survey by the Barna Group, a Christian market-research company, the divorce rate among born-again Christians is 35 percent—exactly the same as for the population as a whole. (Of course, the propensity of the non-born-again to cohabit rather than marry may artificially lower their divorce rates; but even if break-ups by couples who live together are counted as divorces, the born-again rate is only three percentage points lower than that of the general population.) The survey also uncovered some interesting denominational variation in the divorce rate: Catholics (whose hierarchy still holds a traditional line on divorce) were much less likely to divorce (25 percent) than Protestants (39 percent). Among the latter,

Pentecostals were the most likely to divorce (44 percent) and Presbyterians were the least likely (28 percent). So why do many Christians not heed Jesus Christ's warning that "anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery"? Because they don't agree with him, according to the Barna researchers: only one in four born-again Christians—and only one in seven respondents overall—"strongly agrees" that divorce when no adultery has taken place is a sin.

—"Born Again Christians Just as Likely to Divorce as Are Non-Christians," Barna Group

A Woman's Work Is Never Done

We always knew it was true, but now there's proof—working women have less leisure time than working men. According to a first-of-its-kind study of American time use, conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employed men on average spend about 6.4 hours a day at work, whereas employed women spend about five hours. But a woman's extra nonworking time is usually given over to household activities; when her day at the office is over, she still has just under two hours of housework waiting for her (compared with an hour and ten minutes for working men) and about forty-five minutes of caring for family members (versus about twenty-four minutes for men). Working men also claim nearly forty minutes more "leisure" time a day—time that their female counterparts tend to spend running errands, participating in civic activities, talking on the phone, or engaging in "personal care activities." What do men do with their extra

free time? They probably plop down in front of the TV, where Americans spend about half their leisure hours.

—"American Time Use Survey," Bureau of Labor Statistics

THE ECONOMY

The Facts Don't Matter

Journalists tend to play up economic good news during Democratic Administrations and play it down when the Republicans are in power. Or that's the argument advanced by the latest entrant in the media-bias wars: a paper from the (conservative) American Enterprise Institute that analyzes more than a decade's worth of newspaper headlines. As the authors point out, whether economic news is seen as good or bad can depend on a headline writer's spin: the same GDP numbers can produce a headline reading "ECONOMY REMAINED STRONG" or "GDP GROWTH DISAPPOINTS," depending on how one chooses to look at them. The authors' research suggests that American papers tended to give the same economic news a more positive spin during the Clinton years than during the two Bush Administrations. (Among ten major daily newspapers, only the *Houston Chronicle* was more likely to put a positive gloss on economic news during a Bush presidency.) If the AEI authors are right (and it's worth noting that one of them is the controversial gun-control scholar John Lott, who has himself been accused of bias—and worse—over the years), then the putatively liberal-leaning media are just behaving like the public, whose opinions on matters economic, a new Brookings study finds, are determined more by ideology

than by any factual knowledge of the issues at hand.

—"Is Newspaper Coverage of Economic Events Politically Biased?" John Lott Jr. and Kevin Hassett, AEI; "What Does the Public Know About Economic Policy and How Does It Know It?" Alan S. Blinder and Alan B. Krueger, Princeton

SCIENCE & HEALTH

Nasty, Brutish, and Tall

The Middle Ages may have been a healthier epoch in which to be alive than many of the centuries that followed, according to a study of male height. Using a sample of skeletons from Northern Europe, the study reports that average male height (a solid proxy for good health) fell sharply during the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, from about 5'8" in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries to 5'5" by the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Northern Europeans didn't recover their medieval stature until the twentieth century. The diseases that accompanied increased trade bear some of the blame for the decline in height, and climatic shifts may have played a part as well. So, too, did the economic expansion and urbanization that got under way in the fifteenth century. That expansion paved the way for the present era's high standard of living, but in its early stages it involved economic dislocation, rising inequality, and poorer living and working conditions.

—"New Light on the 'Dark Ages': The Remarkably Tall Stature of Northern European Men During the Medieval Era," Richard H. Steckel, Ohio State University

Compiled by Ross Douhat and Marshall Poe. For links to the reports and documents discussed in these pages visit www.theatlantic.com/doc/200412/primarysources

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		1 Year	Rank	3 Years	Rank	5 Years	Rank	10 Years	Rank
Neuberger Berman International Fund—Investor Class	9.75%	41.76%	2%	9.37%	3%	5.44%	14%	7.99%	18%
Lipper International Multi-Cap Core Average	0.44%	29.21%		2.70%		0.75%		5.07%	

Performance data quoted represent past performance, which is no guarantee of future results. The investment return and principal value of an investment will fluctuate so that an investor's shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than their original cost. Results are shown on a "total return" basis and include reinvestment of all dividends and capital gain distributions. Current performance may be lower or higher than the performance data quoted. For performance data current to the most recent month-end, please visit www.nb.com/performance. Please note that investing in foreign securities involves greater risks than investing in securities of U.S. issuers, including currency fluctuations, potential political instability, restrictions on foreign investors, less regulation and less market liquidity. Source: Lipper. Neuberger Berman International Fund ranked against the following number of funds in Lipper's International Multi-Cap Core Category over the following time periods: 257 funds over the 1-year period, 220 funds over the 3-year period, 159 funds over the 5-year period, and 44 funds over the 10-year period. Rankings based on total return ended 6/30/04. Neuberger Berman Management Inc. caps the Investor class expenses of the fund. Absent this arrangement, the returns would be lower.

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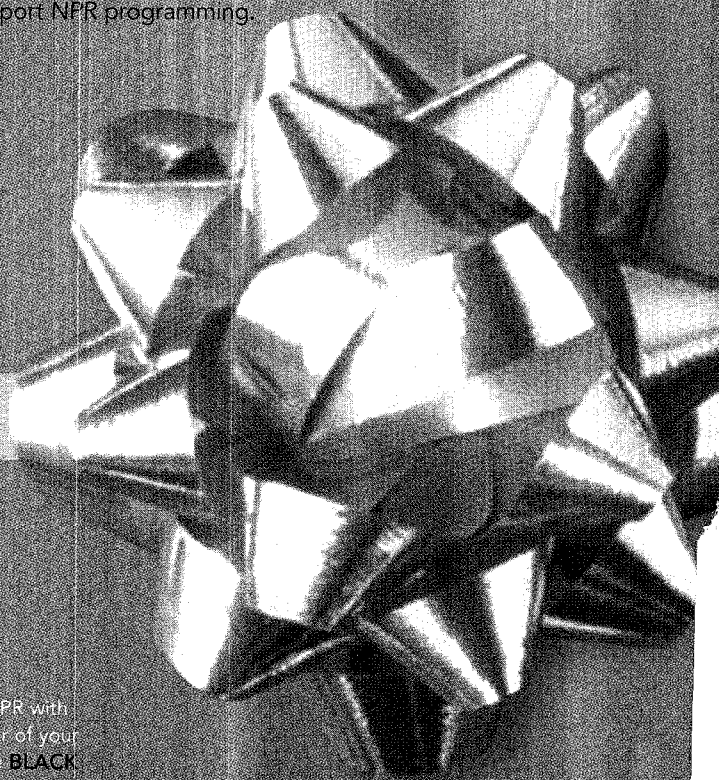
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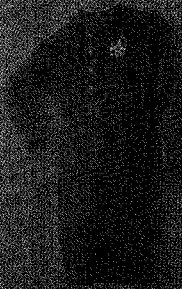
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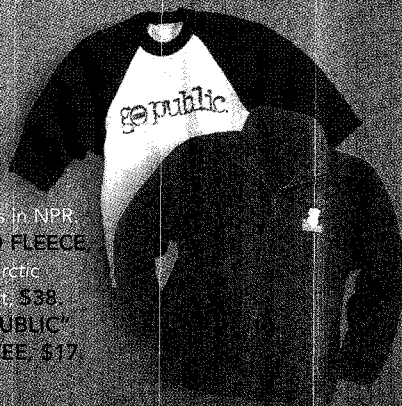
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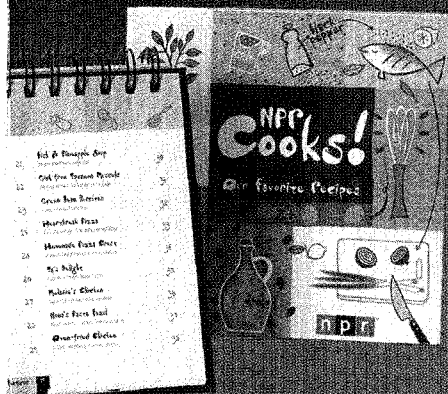


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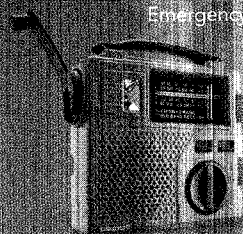




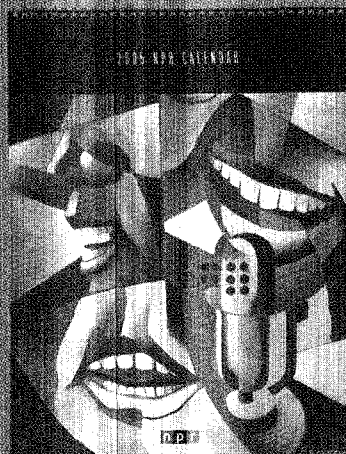
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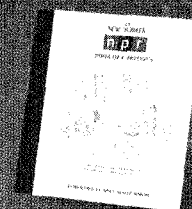
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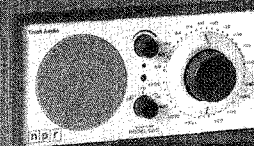
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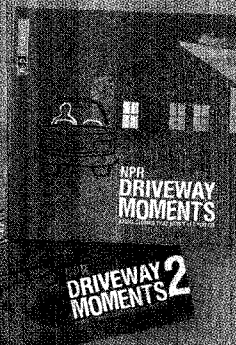
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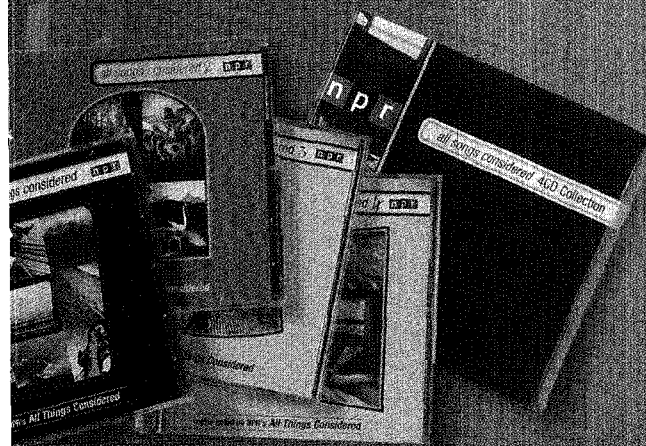
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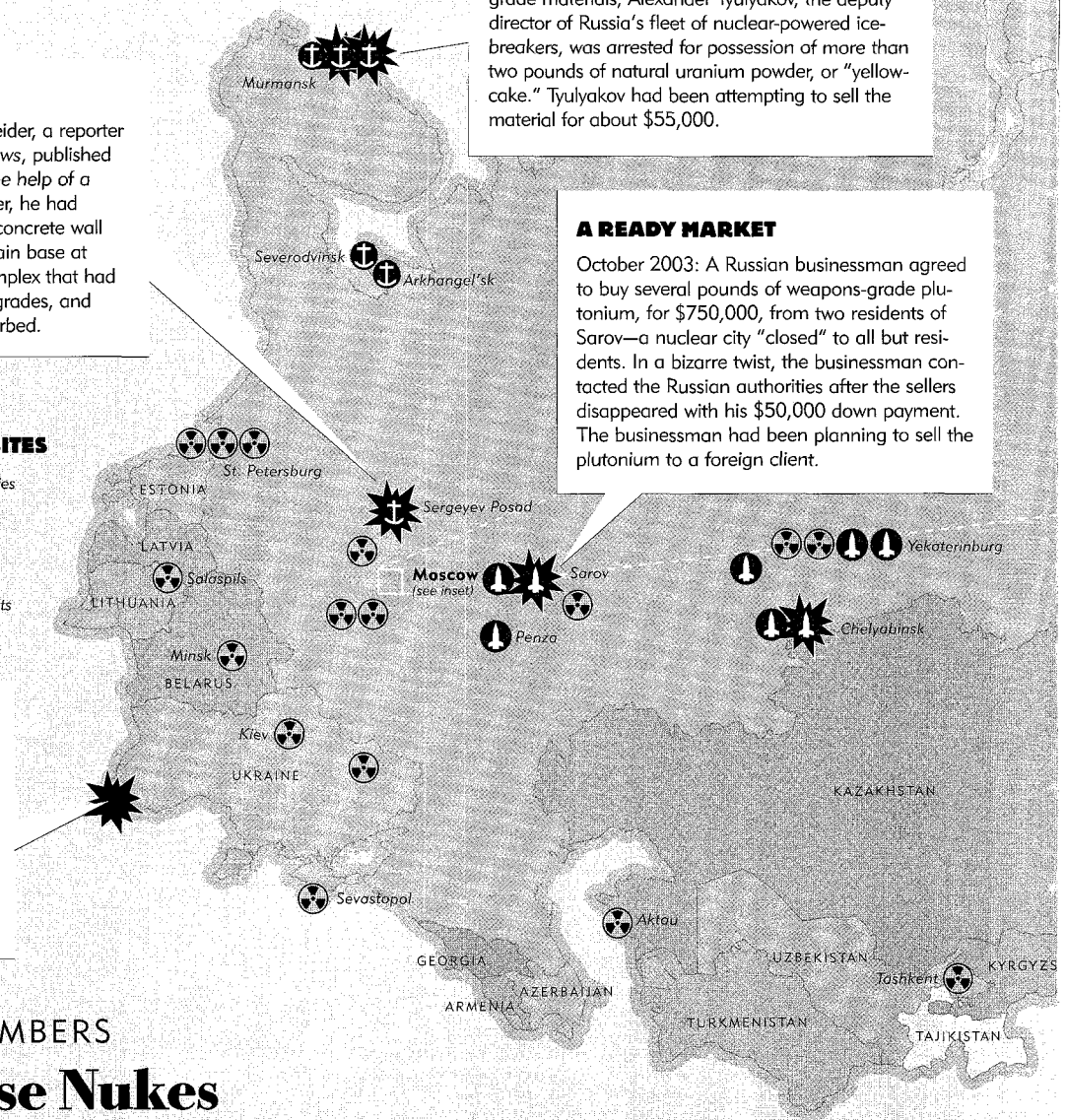
August 2003: In the first known case involving the top management of a facility handling weapons-grade materials, Alexander Tyulyakov, the deputy director of Russia's fleet of nuclear-powered ice-breakers, was arrested for possession of more than two pounds of natural uranium powder, or "yellow-cake." Tyulyakov had been attempting to sell the material for about \$55,000.

December 2002: Daniel Snieder, a reporter for the *San Jose Mercury News*, published a story revealing that with the help of a retired Russian military officer, he had walked through a hole in a concrete wall and gained access to the main base at Sergeyev Posad, a naval complex that had already received security upgrades, and spent about an hour undisturbed.

October 2003: A Russian businessman agreed to buy several pounds of weapons-grade plutonium, for \$750,000, from two residents of Sarov—a nuclear city “closed” to all but residents. In a bizarre twist, the businessman contacted the Russian authorities after the sellers disappeared with his \$50,000 down payment. The businessman had been planning to sell the plutonium to a foreign client.

- Weapons facilities
- Civilian facilities
- Naval facilities
- Security incidents since 9/11

February 2004: Ukrainian authorities arrested a suspect trying to smuggle radioactive material across the Ukrainian-Hungarian border. Soviet-era documents found with the material indicate that it included uranium. The suspect may be a former Soviet military-intelligence officer.



Russia's Loose Nukes

In its heyday the Soviet Union was an enthusiastic producer of both nuclear weapons and the fissile materials required to make them. The Soviets were notably less enthusiastic about securing and keeping track of those materials: although weapons themselves were usually well guarded, the facilities housing plutonium and highly enriched uranium were often neglected; most did not even have theft-detection devices or security cameras. Fissile materials were typically stored in cans with simple wax seals that could easily be broken, counterfeited, and replaced. At the Mayak facility, outside the city of Chelyabinsk, thousands of cans of plutonium—thirty

The map above shows the locations of fifty-one sites within the former Soviet Union that today collectively house roughly 660 tons of weapons-usable uranium and plutonium—enough to make as many as 70,000 nuclear bombs. The sites serve a variety of purposes, ranging from civilian power generation and academic research to military use.

Security at most of these facilities is better today than it was in the days of the Soviet Union. Thanks to a series of well-publicized initiatives—

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TEMPTATION FOR TERRORISTS

According to Russian newspaper reports, the Chechen terrorists who took control of a Moscow theater in October of 2002 had originally considered also seizing the Kurchatov Institute—a site with enough highly enriched uranium to produce dozens of nuclear weapons. More recently, when terrorists seized a school in Beslan, near the Chechen border, in September, Russian authorities hurriedly dispatched troops to all the country's nuclear facilities. Russian officials claim they have foiled four attempts by terrorists to infiltrate nuclear-warhead storage facilities.

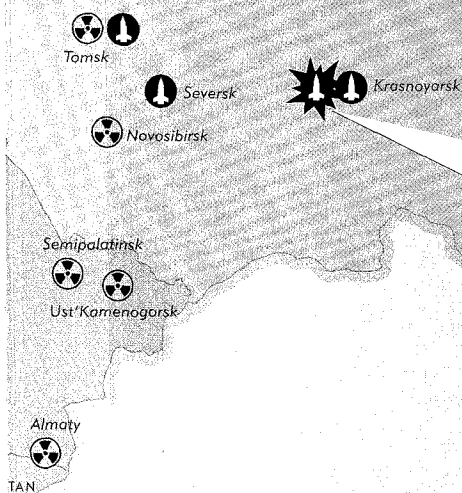


THE MAFIA, THE POLICE, AND RUSSIAN INTELLIGENCE

December 2001: Seven people were arrested trying to sell more than two pounds of "low-enriched" uranium for \$30,000 in a café in the town of Balashikha, outside Moscow. Although the case did not involve weapons-grade uranium, the composition of the selling group was worrisome: it included a Russian intelligence officer, former members of the nuclear-trafficking division of Russia's police, and members of an organized-crime group. The uranium had been stolen from the enrichment and fabrication plant Elektrostal, which has suffered a number of thefts, including thefts of highly enriched uranium, and is not scheduled to have upgrades completed until 2009.

VULNERABLE GUARDIANS

January 2002: Four soldiers from the guard unit at the weapons-grade-plutonium production facility in Zheleznogorsk were killed, in two separate incidents. On January 1 a drunk soldier lost control of his truck, hitting and killing three soldiers. Unit officials initially tried to cover up the accident. On January 20 the fourth died from a gunshot to the head under mysterious circumstances.



at the main doors, and placing fissile material in rudimentary steel cages.

In fact, some 350 tons of nuclear material in the former Soviet republics rests in facilities that have yet to receive any upgrade at all. And according to *Securing the Bomb: An Agenda for Action*, a report produced by Matthew Bunn and Anthony Wier, researchers at Harvard University, whose work was commissioned by the Nuclear Threat Initiative, less weapons-usable material was secured in the former Soviet republics in the two years after 9/11 than in the two years before. Reasons for such plodding progress are varied: a good number of the still unsecured sites are military facilities requiring greater diplomatic finesse and more-intricate upgrade procedures; few people have the proper skills and clearances to perform the upgrades; and the United States is grudgingly shoul-

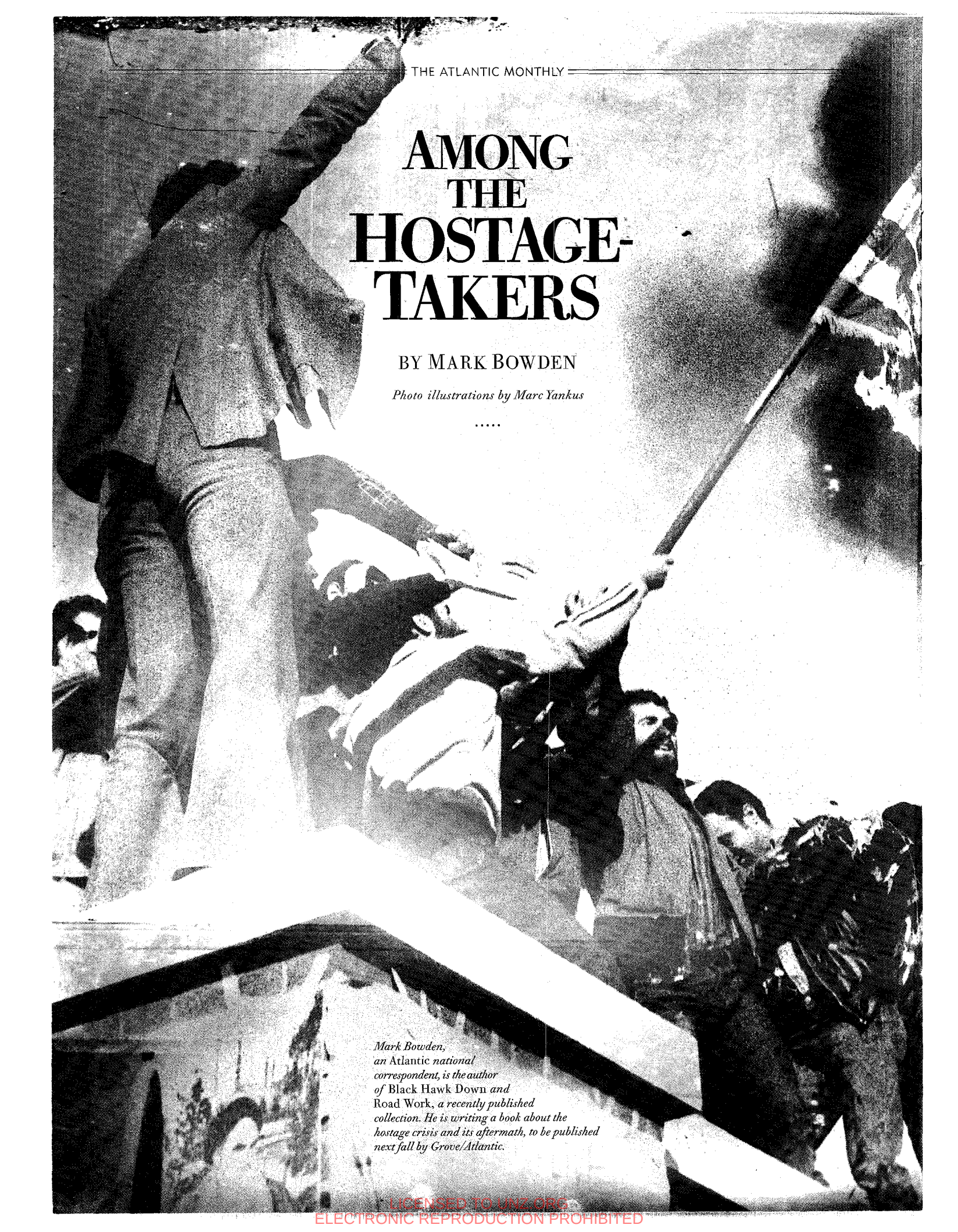
dering most of the cost with only modest help from its allies. At the current rate it will take at least thirteen more years for all the former Soviet republics' nuclear materials to be comprehensively secured.

Even after the materials have received security upgrades they remain vulnerable to theft. At some of these facilities guards keep their weapons unloaded (to prevent misfiring, they say); intrusion detectors are turned off (because false alarms are "annoying," guards say); and supposedly secured doors are propped open (to ease passage, guards say). Drunken fights and shootings among security personnel are not uncommon. Since 1991, according to confirmed reports, stolen weapons-usable materials have been seized eighteen times in Russia and other countries, including France and Germany; most of the materials are

believed to have come from the sites on this map. In 2003 alone, radioactive material thought to be purloined from former Soviet facilities was reportedly discovered in China, the Czech Republic, Poland, and Thailand. (Russian officials will often confirm that a theft has occurred, but not where. Given the country's penchant for secrecy and obfuscation, there are probably additional incidents we don't know about.)

The incidents noted on the map—all of which have occurred since 9/11—reveal that although Russia may not have the malice of North Korea, the hubris of Iran, or the political instability of Pakistan, its distressingly slow progress in securing its nuclear-weapons fuel makes it perhaps the most attractive option in the world today for terrorists seeking bomb-making material.—TERRENCE HENRY

MAP SOURCE: NUCLEAR THREAT INITIATIVE, "CONTROLLING NUCLEAR WARHEADS AND MATERIALS"; U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY



THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY

AMONG THE HOSTAGE- TAKERS

BY MARK BOWDEN

Photo illustrations by Marc Yankus

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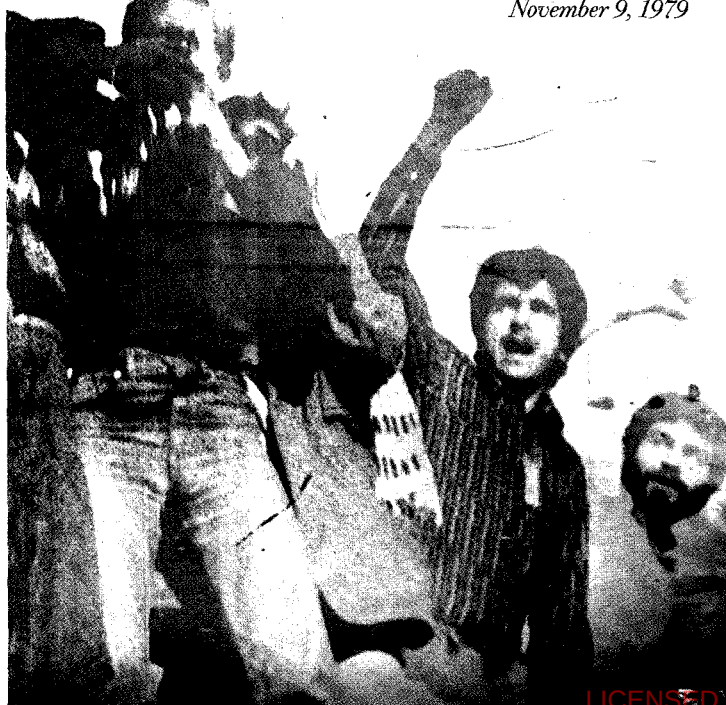
Mark Bowden, an Atlantic national correspondent, is the author of Black Hawk Down and Road Work, a recently published collection. He is writing a book about the hostage crisis and its aftermath, to be published next fall by Grove/Atlantic.

Twenty-five years ago in Tehran a group of Iranian students stormed the U.S. embassy and took hostage the entire American diplomatic mission—igniting a fifteen-month international crisis whose impact is reverberating still. Now, for the first time, many of the leading hostage-takers speak candidly about their actions—which a surprising number deeply regret

Nowadays the grand old U.S. embassy in Tehran looks forlorn, like a hostage left behind and long forgotten. A solid battleship of an office building in orange brick, two stories high and more than a block long, it was once the symbol of America's formidable presence in Iran. Today it still stands in the heart of the capital, facing a wide, busy thoroughfare called Taleghani Avenue, at the front of a leafy twenty-seven-acre oasis, a rare haven from the noisy hustle of this city of more than 12 million. Long ago dubbed the "Den of Spies" by Islamic radicals, the old embassy building is now garishly covered with anti-American graffiti, banners, and propaganda displays to remind people of the nation's undying disdain for its once favorite ally. The embassy compound is home to the Revolutionary Guards, an elite military unit that reports to the black-turbaned clerics of Iran's authoritarian mullahocracy, and to the *basisj*, Islamic brownshirts, the civilian goon squads that turn out en masse and at a moment's notice to demonstrate on behalf of the regime and to help put down those who engage in public displays of dissent and "immorality," such as women whose scarves do not fully cover their hair, or young people who hold hands. The former embassy itself serves as an anti-American museum, with a grim, ugly permanent display called "The Great Aban 13th Exhibition," commemorating one of the most important dates on the modern Iranian calendar. Aban 13 corresponds to November 4, the date on which, twenty-five years ago, scores of Iranian students scaled the compound walls and took hostage the entire U.S. diplomatic mission, setting off a tense fifteen-month standoff between the United States and Iran. It was one of the founding events of the Islamic Republic, and its geopolitical repercussions are still being felt throughout the world.

The old embassy is supposed to be an official shrine to that bold act of national defiance, which defined for the world the glorious 1979 revolution, a kind of Iranian counterpart to America's Boston Tea Party—but more central and significant. Yet in the four times I went to the embassy during trips to Iran in the past year, it was empty of visitors. A bookstore just outside the entrance, which was once known for selling anti-American literature and reprints of the thousands of secret embassy documents seized in the takeover (the infamous "spy den documents"), was vacant when I first saw it in December, its racks empty, but nine months later appeared ready to reopen as a bookstore for

*Iranian occupiers at the
United States embassy, Tehran,
November 9, 1979*



children. The slogans and spiteful artwork that had been spray-painted on the embassy's brick outer walls by angry crowds during the tumultuous hostage crisis had faded—including an image of the Statue of Liberty with its face portrayed as a death mask and a sign in English that said "DEATH TO THE USA."

Even the guardhouse on the southeast corner, where visitors enter, was in shambles. Two friendly, unshaven Revolutionary Guards stood behind the counter in a small, marble-veneered reception area that looked like a frat house on Sunday morning, with battered furniture, an old swivel chair leaning precariously on its stem with cushion stuffing hanging out, dirt caked on the floors and walls, and muddy boot prints everywhere. I pointed quizzically at a boot print on the ceiling, and asked my guide and interpreter, Ramin, to tell the guards that as an American citizen, I protested these abuses of what could arguably be called U.S. property.

"Tell them that if they are going to steal it, the least they could do is take care of it," I said.

When Ramin relayed my comments, the guards laughed, looked around sheepishly at the mess, and shrugged happily. They were conscripts serving out the last few months of their duty at a gravy post. "It's great here," one said. "Nothing ever happens."

The exhibit at the "Den of Spies" museum is amateurish. An important-looking "spy document," stamped TOP SECRET, on closer inspection turns out to be a memo requesting drivers for the embassy's motor pool.

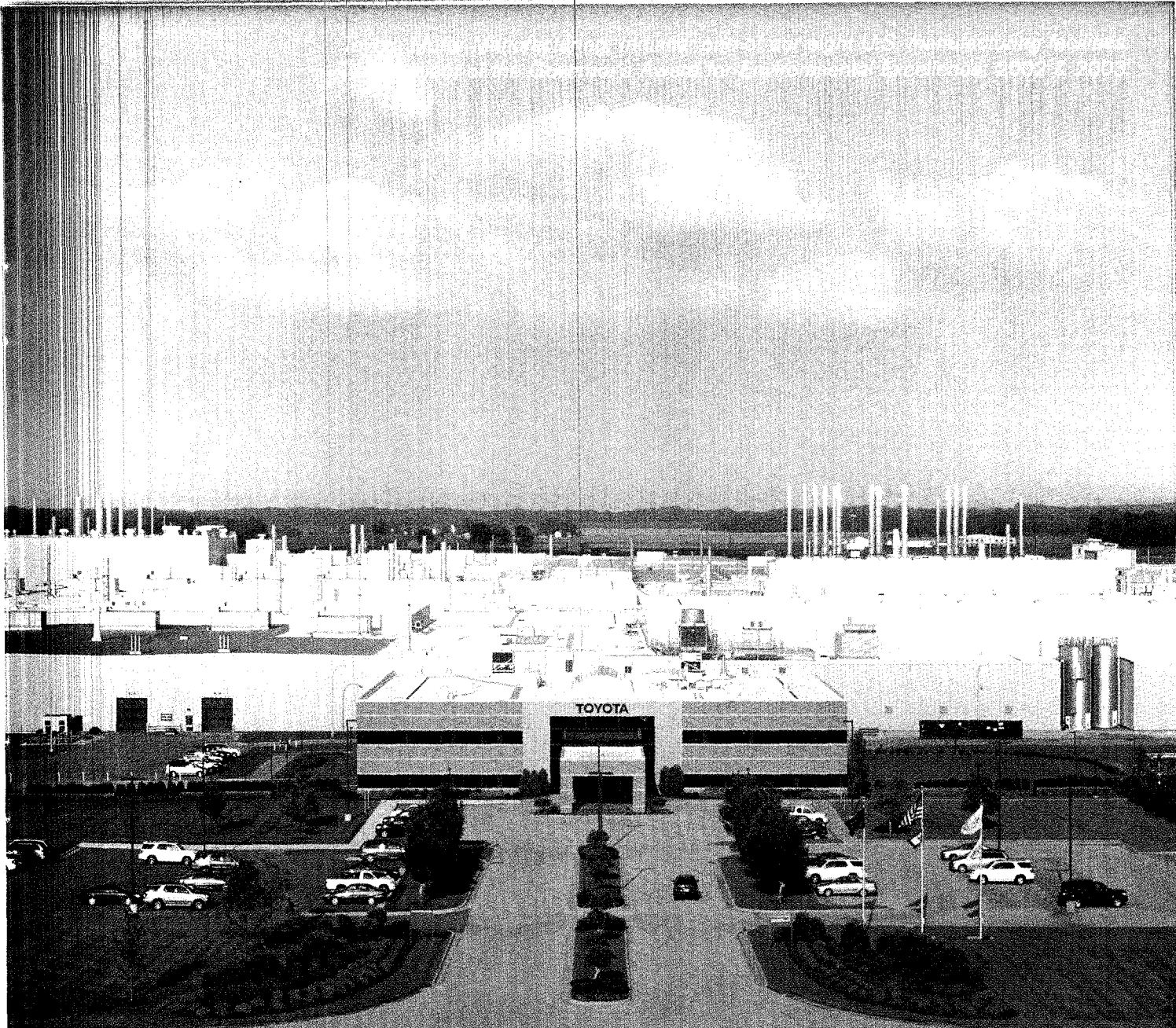
The exhibit itself is amateurish, as if put together by a group of high school students with a bad attitude. On the front steps are two cartoonish statues that appear to have been fashioned from papier-mâché and thickly painted over in bronze. The first—seemingly based on a photograph of one of the hostages, Corporal Steven Kirtley—is of a Marine surrendering with his hands clasped behind his head; the second is a replica of the Statue of Liberty with a white bird (a symbol of Islam) caged in her abdomen. Inside the museum is more of the same: displays illustrating America's "role of evil" in the world over the past several decades; lots of gory photographs of children presented as victims of American bombings; and a framed copy of an important-looking "spy document," impressively stamped CLASSIFIED and TOP SECRET, which on closer inspection turns out to be a memo requesting additional drivers for the embassy's motor pool. There are also pieces of helicopters recovered in the Iranian desert from a failed U.S. secret mission on

April 24, 1980, to rescue the hostages; photographs of the hostages themselves; and somewhat dated propaganda showcasing America and Saddam Hussein as partners in crime. But in its preoccupation with American symbols the exhibit is more a defacement than an indictment, like drawing a big nose and a moustache on a poster of someone famous. That such a gloating, adolescent display has endured in the heart of Tehran for a quarter century says more about Iran than it does about the United States.

For a visiting American, Iran is like Bizarro World, the mirror universe in Superman comics in which everything is inverted. Bad is good and good is bad. In Tehran patriotic symbols of the United States are everywhere, but always wrenched into images of violence, evil, and defeat. The American flag is shown in the shape of a gun; the bald eagle is shown going down in flames. In the West we are bombarded with advertising images of youth, beauty, sex, and life; in Tehran the preponderance of advertising images celebrate death. There are murals everywhere honoring martyrs—primarily those who died in the eight-year Iran-Iraq War, in the 1980s, but also more recent Islamic martyrs, including Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the spiritual leader of Hamas, who was assassinated by Israeli forces in Gaza earlier this year. Billboards in the West often feature scantily dressed, provocatively posed teens, but in Tehran the gigantic wall murals tend to depict robed grandpas and grumpy-looking white-bearded clerics—especially common are the bespectacled face of the current Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and the more imposing, threatening visage of the late Imam, Ruhollah Khomeini, the major force behind the overthrow of the Shah in 1979, and the father of Iran's theocratic state.

This Bizarro World feeling is pervasive. In August, when I left on one of my visits to Iran, a media blitz at home was trumpeting a more or less nonstop parade of American triumphs in the Olympic Games in Greece. Days later in Tehran the popular press was heralding a humiliating cascade of U.S. defeats. The *Tehran Times* reported an "anguished reaction" in Washington, D.C., over the three losses of the men's basketball team and its failure to win a gold medal (it won bronze), and when the American boxer Andre Ward advanced toward a gold medal, it ran the headline "SAVES U.S. TEAM FROM HISTORIC FAILURE." Coverage of the fighting in Iraq cheers savage insurgent violence there, and portrays the Iraqi Shia Ayatollah Ali Sistani—not the U.S. and British armies that actually toppled the tyrant Saddam Hussein—as the real force for democracy and independence.

And just when one seems to have the place in full *inverse* focus, there comes some wildly discordant note—such as the blocks-long open-air drug market right in Tehran's center, where dealers hawk Viagra, Ecstasy, and opium, at rock-bottom infidel prices. In this pious city where women are forced to cover their bodies and heads, even in stifling



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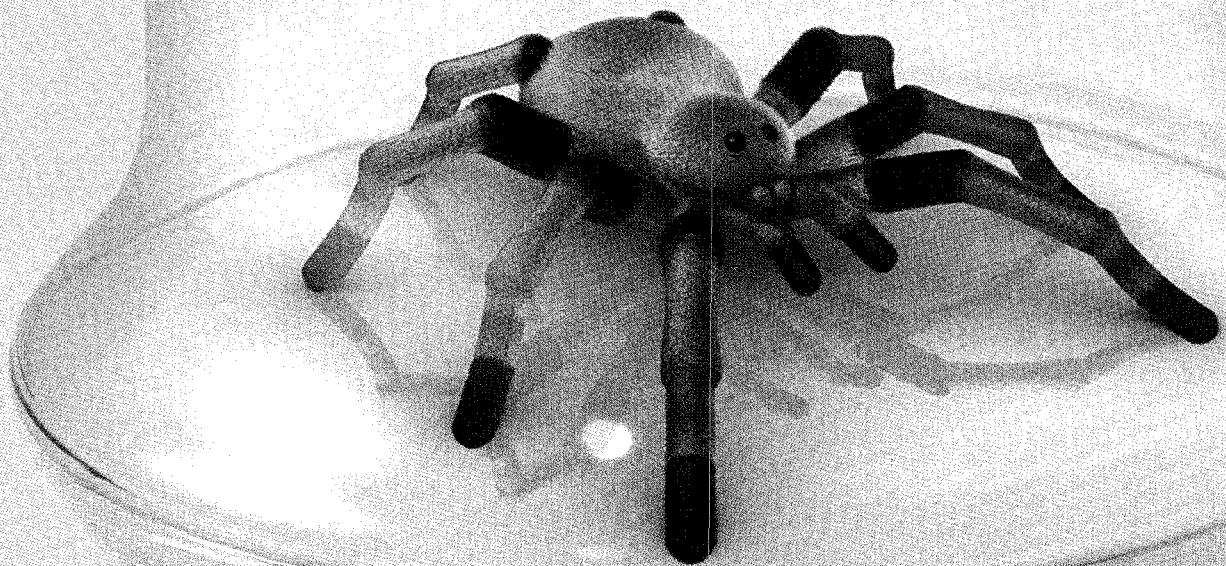
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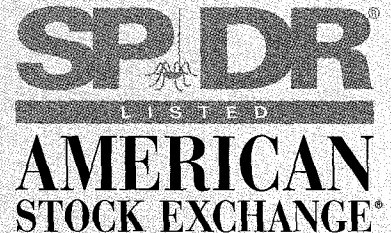
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summer heat, it is common to see prostitutes—duly scarved and draped—freely patrolling the streets, sending with a slightly heavier application of makeup, flamboyant jewelry, and a few straying strands of hair the same message sent by spike heels and a G-string in Atlantic City. As I posed before a Khomeini mural for a snapshot one afternoon, a well-dressed young Iranian passerby asked me in perfect English, “Why do you want a picture of that asshole?”

Nowhere is Bizarro World more evident than in the country’s national memory of the *gerogan-giri*, the “hostage-taking.” On November 4, 1979, a well-organized core group of about sixty Iranian university students scaled the walls of the U.S. embassy compound, seized the embassy building, and bound and blindfolded about sixty Americans, including the embassy’s top foreign-service and CIA officers, military liaisons, administrators, clerks, secretaries, and a detachment of Marine guards. The invaders, calling themselves Students Following the Imam’s Line, demanded that their despised Shah, who had been forced to flee the country nine months earlier and had just been admitted to the United States for cancer treatment, be returned immediately to face revolutionary justice. Hundreds of his former associates had already been executed or thrown in jail. President Jimmy Carter refused the demand,

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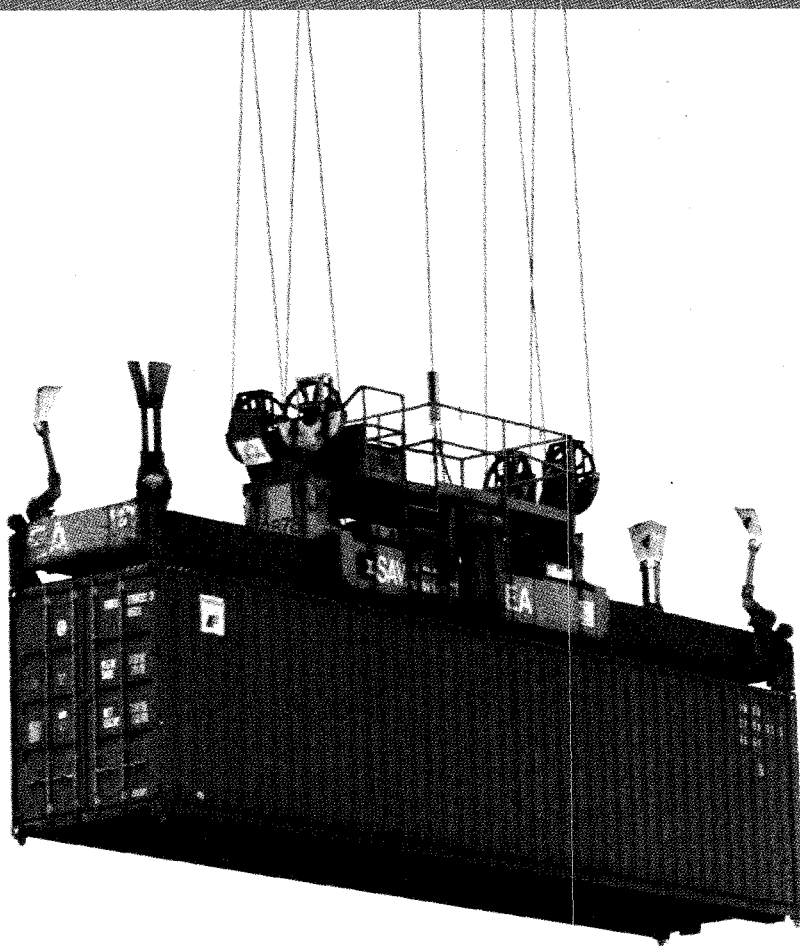
and the subsequent fifteen-month standoff became one of the signature international crises of modern times. It left a lot of Americans feeling helpless and enraged, while imbuing Iranians, many of whom blamed the United States for the Shah’s inarguable despotism, with a new sense of strength and national purpose. The episode turned tragic when the secret rescue mission, approved after much agonizing by President Carter, ended in catastrophe at a staging area in the Iranian desert: owing to freak dust storms, several helicopters had to set down or turn back and the entire operation had to be aborted. During the withdrawal one helicopter collided with a C-130 transport plane, exploded into flames, and left eight American Marines and airmen dead. In a final insult to Carter, the hostages were all released on January 20, 1981—Inauguration Day for the man who had defeated him, Ronald Reagan. The hostage-taking was an outrageous violation of international law and of the age-old rules gov-

erning diplomatic relations between civilized nations; but as shocking as it was at the time, in today’s world of vicious Islamist terrorism the *gerogan-giri* seems almost quaint.

The different ways this event is remembered in America and in Iran illustrate how nations invent their own pasts, and how the simplification of history can create impossible gulfs between peoples. To Americans, the hostage crisis was an unprovoked, inexcusable crime, carried out by a scruffy band of half-crazy Islamist zealots driven by a senseless hatred of all things American. It was a terrifying ordeal for the hostages and their families, fatal for eight of the would-be rescuers, and a political disaster for Jimmy Carter—perhaps the single most important factor in making him a one-term President. In the United States it was a protracted, very public humiliation, made worse by breathless lead-story coverage in newspapers and on television, which began newscasts with a daily reminder of the predicament (“DAY 54: AMERICA HELD HOSTAGE”). It was America’s first modern encounter with hostile Islamists, and the first time Americans heard their country called “the Great Satan.”

For many Iranians, however, the hostage crisis was a glorious triumph. Embossed with florid Shia mysticism, the episode has taken on the force of national myth—an epic story of a small group of devout young *gerogan-girha* (hostage-takers) who, armed with only prayer and purity of heart, stormed the gates of the most evil, potent empire on the planet, booted out the American devils, and secured the success of the mullahs’ revolution. It is a poignant and poetic tale of how these innocent servants of the Imam treated their often crude and abusive captives with kindness and respect even as they pieced together shredded embassy documents to expose and thwart America’s plots to destroy the revolution and reinstate the Shah. And when the Great Satan dispatched its deadly commandos to slay these young heroes (this is the part that fires the blood of the faithful), Allah stirred dust storms to down the infidel helicopters and turn back the invaders. This is the story taught to schoolchildren who are bused in to see the Great Aban 13th Exhibition and to touch the remains of the helicopters that Allah scorched while the innocent *gerogan-girha* slept.

For the past three years I have been working on a book about the hostage crisis, trying to see it through both American and Iranian eyes and to understand how it shaped the world of today. On two recent trips to Tehran, I went looking for the people who planned and directed the embassy takeover and the ones who found themselves caught up in it. I wanted to know who they were, what had happened to them in the quarter century since they climbed the embassy walls, what they had hoped to accomplish, and how they felt, in retrospect, about what they had done. Given Iran’s current status as one of the two remaining countries on President Bush’s “axis of evil,” a designation most Iranians seem both to resent and to perversely enjoy, I thought I might learn



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something about the world's proudest and noisiest self-styled Islamic republic by finding those who so enthusiastically poisoned its relationship with the United States.

What I discovered was a group of graying politicians and intellectuals with a broad range of views about the event. How they felt about the *gerogan-giri* tended to define where they stood on Iran's wide political spectrum. Some remain true believers and have prospered in the mullahocracy they helped create, and even as they acknowledge that the embassy seizure permanently stained their nation in the eyes of the world, they defend it as necessary and just. They see the problems of modern Iran as growing pains, and are heartened by the upsurge in Islamist fundamentalism around the world. Some of these true believers refused to speak to an American reporter, who they suspected would misunderstand or distort their words. Other *gerogan-girha* are clearly ambivalent about what they did, weighing the pride and satisfaction of their youthful defiance against a more mature understanding of world politics. These people tend to stay in the shadows, afraid of getting in trouble or of drawing attention to themselves. But a surprising number of *gerogan-girha*, constituting a third group, are outspokenly embarrassed by their role and regard their actions as a monumental mistake—a criminal act that disrupted not just the lives of the American hostages but ultimately the life of their own country, which has found itself ever since in a downward spiral of economic, political, and social isolation.

Ibrahim Asgharzadeh, a ringleader of the takeover who has become a reform politician and newspaperman, is emphatic in his assessment: "Hostage-taking is not an acceptable action under international norms and standards. The hostages underwent severe emotional difficulties. Prolonging it affected both countries in a negative way. The chaos caused such tension between Iran and the United States that even now, after two decades, no one knows how to resolve it."

One thing I learned from talking to the *gerogan-girha* was that the episode Americans remember as the "hostage crisis" was not supposed to involve the prolonged detention of hostages. The students who seized the embassy believed that they were participating in a conventional protest—not unlike those at U.S. colleges a decade before, when rebellious American students occupied campus buildings. The young Iranians envisioned having to subdue and confine members of the American mission for perhaps a day or two, but they had no intention of holding them for any length of time. They made no preparations for doing so.

The demand for the Shah's return was primarily rhetorical. The hostage-takers' immediate goal was to put pressure on the provisional government of Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan. This interim authority had been appointed by Khomeini after the fall of the Shah to preside until a new

constitution could be written. The revolution had unleashed tumultuous political passions, and Khomeini, monitoring events from the holy city of Qom, was of two minds about the future. Should Iran be ruled directly by clerics, or should it have a secular democracy? Bazargan favored a Western-style state, but in the eyes of extremists—both Islamists and Marxists—he was watering down the revolution. They saw the provisional government's efforts to stabilize Iran and to re-establish ties with the rest of the world as a sellout.

The opportunity for radical change appeared to be slipping away. So extremists fanned fears of an American-led counter coup, and portrayed as treason all contacts between the provisional government and the United States—which were mostly over such practical matters as recovering the \$6 billion the Shah had deposited in U.S. banks and obtaining needed parts for the Iranian air force's American-built F-16s. The plan to seize the embassy grew out of these fears. Many of the students involved believed the stories of an American plot, but the cooler heads behind them had more-local concerns. Khomeini was not—as many Americans always assumed—informed about the takeover in advance, and by the time it was presented to him it was already a fait accompli, and hugely popular. Hundreds of thousands of gleeful Iranians celebrated in the streets around the embassy night and day, burning Carter in effigy and chanting "Death to America!" Khomeini had little choice but to embrace the brash *gerogan-girha*, and to officially anoint them national heroes. In a development never foreseen or even hoped for by the student leaders, Bazargan's government resigned two days after the takeover, and the revolution tilted permanently into the arms of the mullahs.

The *gerogan-girha* saw themselves as part of an experiment that ought to be familiar to Americans. They were trying to build a utopia, their own version of "a city upon a hill." They were striving toward *umma*, a perfect, classless, crimeless Muslim community infused with the "spirit of God."

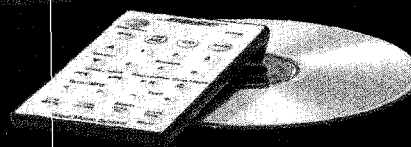
But instead of a shining city upon a hill, Tehran today is a bland, teeming sprawl, a study in faded brown and gray, swimming in a miasma of smog and dust that leaves everything coated with a patina of grit. *Umma* remains a distant, unfulfilled promise, as Iranians grapple with unemployment, rural migration to the cities, rampant corruption, and self-destructive domestic and foreign policies. Straining under tight economic sanctions imposed by the United States and some of its Western allies, Iran remains an international pariah; it courts even tougher sanctions by reportedly working to manufacture nuclear weapons—an effort the regime officially denies but nearly everyone believes is well under way. Women live under archaic restrictions on employment, social relations, and mode of dress. Teachers and other intellectuals labor under oppressive government oversight. Political dissenters often end up in jail, or worse. The country's

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vast Intelligence and Security Ministry is as omnipresent and feared as was SAVAK, the Shah's old secret police.

The *gerogan-girha* live in the ruins of their dream. As they've grown gray-haired and plump, the fame and admiration they once enjoyed have faded like the graffiti at the Den of Spies. Those who despise the current regime now regret their role in bringing a small circle of wealthy, authoritarian clerics to power. And more than anything they blame the hostage crisis for a litany of problems and setbacks that have befallen their country in the past quarter of a century. Iran's loss of ties to the United States after the embassy seizure prompted Saddam Hussein to invade in 1980 (when the hostages were still being held). In the ensuing war Iran lost more than half a million young men. Iran's status as an outlaw nation has had a stifling effect on its chances for an economic turnaround.

Iran is still very much in the grip of CIA-phobia, which has spawned a national industry of conspiracy theories. One of the more breathtaking holds that the embassy seizure was actually orchestrated by the CIA.

Some of the *gerogan-girha* have gone into exile and taken up arms against the religious rulers; others have been harassed, denounced, beaten, or imprisoned for advocating democratic changes. In some cases they have been persecuted by their former colleagues. "None of us in the revolution believed Iran would ever have an autocratic regime again," Mohsen Mirdamadi, a leader of the *gerogan-girha* who is today a controversial reform politician, told a Knight Ridder correspondent earlier this year. "Yet here we are."

Ibrahim Asgharzadeh was a wiry, intense, bearded engineering student when he came up with the idea, in September of 1979, to seize the American embassy. "The initial idea was mine," he told me in an interview in December at the office of his newspaper, *Hambastegi*, off an alley in Tehran. "Ever since high school I had been outraged by American policies."

According to Asgharzadeh, there were five students at that first planning meeting. Two of them wanted to target the Soviet embassy, because, he said, the USSR was "a Marxist and anti-God regime." But the two others—Mirdamadi and Habibullah Bitaraf (now Iran's Minister of Energy)—supported Asgharzadeh's choice. "Our aim was to object to the American government by going to their embassy and occupying it for several hours," he said. "Announcing our objections from within the occupied com-

pound would carry our message to the world in a much more firm and effective way."

Asgharzadeh has served as a member of the Majlis (Iran's legislature) and as president of the Tehran City Council, and ran unsuccessfully for President in 2001. In his politics and journalism he has strongly urged the mullahs to adopt democratic reforms, such as freedom of the press and the elimination of veto powers they wield over political candidates and legislation. When I interviewed Asgharzadeh in Tehran, he looked entirely different from the images of him I had seen in the hostage-crisis days; he is now clean-shaven and very much at ease in a well-tailored suit. Indeed, he looked much too prosperous for his outlaw status; he has been banned from seeking public office, and in 1992 served a term in solitary confinement.

Asgharzadeh is the most prominent of the *gerogan-girha* who have turned against the mullahocracy. With the advantage of hindsight, he now sees the embassy takeover as a mistake—one that has had a disastrous long-term impact on his country. He chose his words carefully (to denounce the takeover is, in a sense, to debunk one of the founding myths of the regime), but his feelings about the episode were clear. "We failed in enforcing it the way it was meant to be," he said. "We lost control of events very quickly—within twenty-four hours! Unfortunately, things got out of hand and took their own course. The initial hours were quite pleasant for us, because [the protest] had a clear purpose and justification. But once the event got out of its student mold and turned into a hostage-taking, it became a long, drawn-out, and corrosive phenomenon."

Asgharzadeh and his fellow planners knew at the time that seizing the embassy would be dramatic and popular with large portions of the Iranian people; they had even thought it might lead eventually to the fall of Bazargan's provisional government. But he and the others had not anticipated how explosive the public response would be. Hundreds of thousands of jubilant Iranians jammed the streets around the embassy to celebrate and rant against the evil U.S. plotters. Students Following the Imam's Line, wearing laminated images of Khomeini around their necks in order to distinguish themselves from other, mostly left-wing political groups that rushed to join the protest, spent much of their first day on the embassy grounds fending off these rivals, who they feared would muddy the purity of their protest with ideological cant, or even harm the Americans. In the confusion, Asgharzadeh recalled, they failed to fully control even their own members.

"American hostages were not supposed to be paraded blindfolded in front of the press," he told me. "The blindfolding was done only for security reasons; in order to control the hostages we used strips of cloth to blindfold them. Unfortunately, our humane objectives were really distorted. We objected strongly to this behavior, and the people who did this were reprimanded, but the damage had



November 1980: The gates of the U.S. embassy in Tehran bear graffiti reading "God Is Great, Khomeini Is Our Leader."

been done. These things did happen, even though we tried very hard to prevent the operation from being manipulated and abused by political groups and factions." Asgharzadeh and his fellow students eventually chased the other political groups out of the compound and locked the gates.

How would President Jimmy Carter respond? Would there be military action? Sanctions? A blockade? This was an unprecedented event, amplified by around-the-clock global television coverage, and it seemed to herald something completely new and unpredictable in international affairs. The thing began to take on a life of its own. With the provisional government in tatters, the United States had no one with whom to negotiate a solution, and the students, locked inside the embassy compound with their hostages, unprepared for a drawn-out ordeal and with no plan for ending it, watched the great storm swirling outside the embassy walls, and began to see themselves as captives too.

In the coming weeks, as it became clear that the stalemate would not be resolved quickly, the hostage-takers recruited hundreds of volunteers to serve as guards, put them through hasty military training, and organized themselves into committees to handle the various practical challenges of holding, feeding, and housing a large number of prisoners. Many of the volunteers went to work piecing together documents that had been shredded by embassy officials on the day of the takeover, while others tried to

decipher and translate them. Fluent English-speakers were brought in, including Massoumeh Ebtekar, who became the voice of the *gerogan-girha* at daily press conferences with the world media and is now one of Iran's Vice Presidents and the Minister of the Environment, and Hussein Sheikh al-Islam, who zealously interrogated the higher-level embassy staffers and CIA officers, and who is today a conservative member of the Majlis. For the young Iranians in charge of the compound, those days were heady and even romantic: Asgharzadeh met and proposed to his wife, Tahereh Rezazadeh, and Ebtekar met and ultimately married Muhammad Hashemi, one of the core group of leaders. But the days grew tedious, frustrating, and—when the failed U.S. rescue mission awakened the *gerogan-girha* to the dangers—frightening.

For the first two days the seized Americans inside the compound were tied to chairs in the ambassador's residence and blindfolded. In the coming weeks and months thirteen of them were released—all women and blacks, in the hope of winning the public support of America's "oppressed" minorities. Most of the remainder—lower-level embassy staffers, guards, and a few unfortunates who had come to Iran on business or as part of cultural exchanges—were herded into the basement of a warehouse on the embassy grounds, where they lived for months in a large windowless space divided into cells by bookshelves. They slept on mats on the floor and were forbidden to speak. The higher-level

AP PHOTO

Americans—diplomats, CIA officers, and military-liaison personnel—were sequestered, and taken away one by one for interrogation. Some were beaten; the CIA officers were worked over with heavy rubber hoses under the supervision of al-Islam.

After the failed rescue mission, in April, the *gerogan-girha* realized the tactical error of keeping the hostages all in the same place, and they were hastily scattered around the country, some to prisons and some to private homes. For the next nine months the captors played shell games with the hostages, moving them frequently.

Asgharzadeh realizes that he cannot change the past. But knowing what he knows now, he would not do it again. "If today I were to devise a plan or political action, for myself personally or for the team of comrades that we were, it would certainly not be an action along the lines of the takeover of the American embassy," he said.

Among the old hostage-takers, Asgharzadeh is not the only one who has found himself at odds with the current regime. In December, the day before I was supposed to interview Mohsen Mirdamadi, one of the original planners of the takeover and now a reform member of the Majlis, he was beaten by stick-wielding *basij*. Mirdamadi, a slightly built man, was delivering a speech at a university when his assailants stormed the lecture hall and attacked him. A photograph on the front pages of the next morning's newspapers in Tehran showed his head and chest bloodied and bandaged.

Muhammad Mousavi Khoeiniha was the key clerical figure behind the embassy seizure. In his office I noticed a metal filing cabinet in the corner. It bore a plate with the inscription "Property of the General Services Administration."

Abbas Abdi, another *gerogan-girha* leader who became a journalist, has been jailed repeatedly for criticizing the regime, and for advocating renewed talks with the United States. He spent eight months in solitary confinement in 1993, and is today serving a four-and-a-half-year term in the notorious Evin Prison—where some of his former hostages were kept—for publishing poll results showing that 74 percent of Iranians favored renewing ties with the United States. The newspaper for which he served as editor in chief, *Salam*, was banned in the late 1990s, and several years ago Abdi got in trouble with the government when he attended a much publicized meeting in Paris with one of his hostages, Barry Rosen, the embassy's public-affairs

officer, in an attempt to begin what Abdi described as a "healing process." But the meeting of the two men fell well short of a warm and fuzzy reunion. Rosen condemned the seizure of the hostages, and Abdi refused to apologize for the action. Indeed, Abdi's old captives feel little sympathy for his plight. One of them, Dave Roeder, a retired Air Force colonel, told me, "It couldn't happen to a nicer guy."

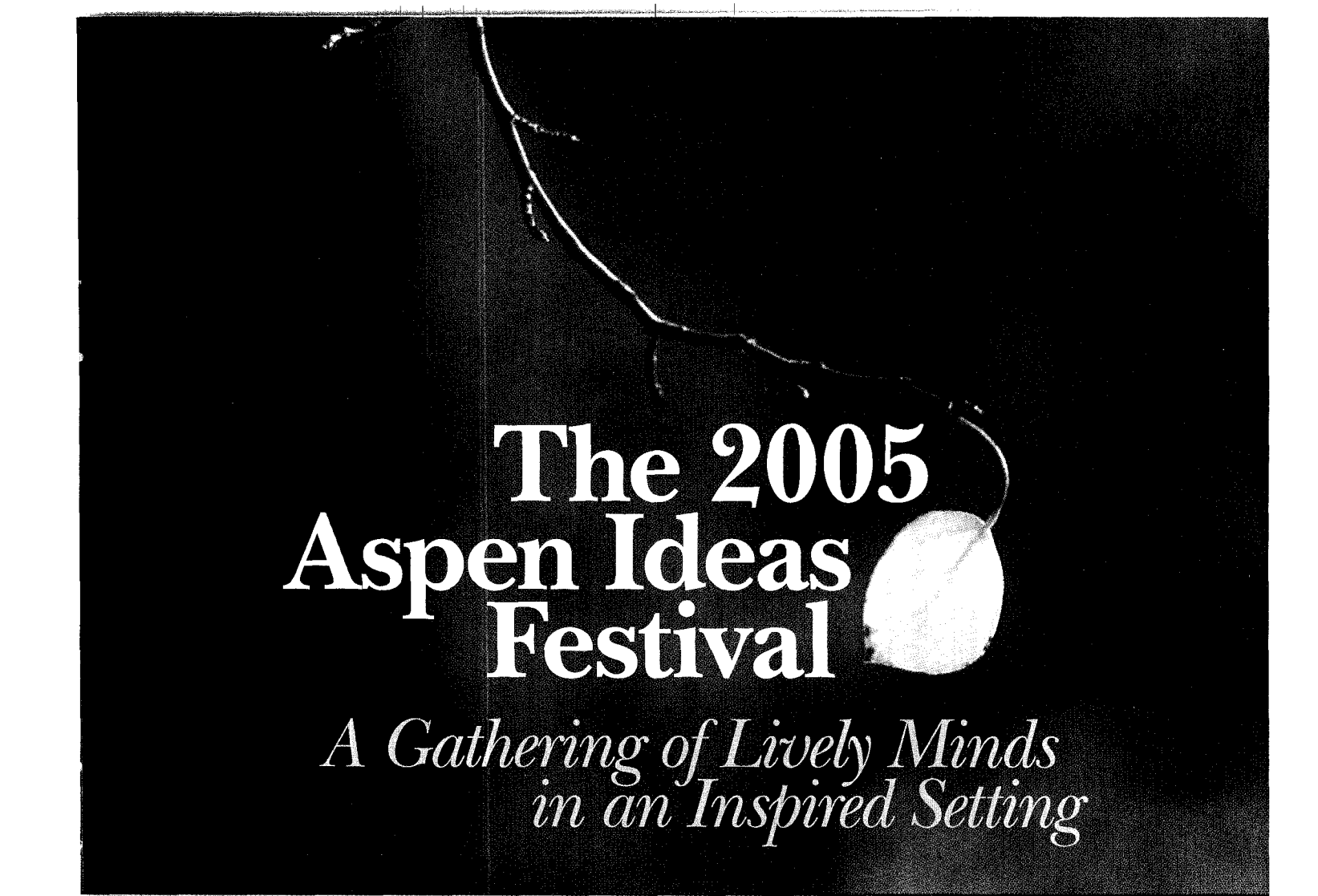
Perhaps the treatment of reformers like Mirdamadi and Abdi explains why some of the *gerogan-girha* tend to speak in stilted euphemisms, even when they are discussing events now a quarter of a century old. Muhammad Naimipour, a friend and political ally of Abdi's who was also one of the *gerogan-girha*, would say only, "What happened overall between Iran and the U.S. could have been handled much better. Even the taking of hostages, in my opinion, could have been handled much better."

When I interviewed Naimipour, in December, he was an elected member of the Majlis, but he has since been crossed off the list of eligible candidates (those who are too critical of the regime are branded "un-Islamic") by the Guardian Council, a twelve-member body of clerics and judges accountable only to the current Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei. Thick-set and graying, Naimipour at forty-eight regards himself as "an old man."

"Because of all the stress and pressures we have had to live with, we have all aged well beyond our actual years," he told me. Several months after our interview Naimipour suffered a stroke.

If anyone at the time had a clearer vision of what the embassy takeover's full consequences might be, it was Muhammad Mousavi Khoeiniha, the black-bearded young cleric to whom the students took their plan in October of 1979. Khoeiniha was a well-known spiritual leader whose sermons in the Jobbestan Mosque, in northern Tehran, drew hundreds of radicals. When the students decided to invade the U.S. embassy, they sought out Khoeiniha in hopes of winning advance approval from Khomeini, with whom the young cleric had close ties. To their surprise Khoeiniha—without consulting Khomeini—immediately gave them his blessing, and thus established himself as the key clerical figure behind the *gerogan-girha*. Khoeiniha told me in an interview in Tehran in August that he had chosen not to ask the Imam's permission because "I did not think it was appropriate to involve him in some action being contemplated by a group of students."

Khoeiniha scoffed at the suggestion that his motive might also have been to force the issue; clearly, asking permission would have set off a furious round of backstage negotiations, which might have aborted the whole idea. But seizing the embassy would stir up popular support and put Khomeini on the spot, compelling him to either make the highly unpopular choice of backing the provisional government—which would have been duty-bound to evict the trespassing students—or go for the practical, post facto option of throwing



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his powerful support behind them. It was a clever and fateful piece of political engineering by Khoeiniha.

Today he remains a controversial, even somewhat mysterious figure. He is a leader of the reform movement, and was the managing director of the banned newspaper *Salam*. In 1999 he was charged with publishing lies and classified information, and was found guilty by a special court for the clergy. He was given a three-and-a-half-year prison term and was sentenced to be flogged, but because of his sterling revolutionary credentials, the penalty was reduced to a fine. Despite his feelings about the current regime, Khoeiniha remains a staunch defender of the embassy takeover, and he still thinks the United States owes Iran an apology for meddling in its affairs. As I was leaving his spacious office in central Tehran, located over the former offices of his newspaper, I noticed a gray four-drawer metal filing cabinet in the corner with a combination lock on the front. It bore a plate with the inscription "Property of the General Services Administration."

Khoeiniha smiled when I asked where it had come from. It was a souvenir from the U.S. embassy.

In the nine months between the fall of the Shah's regime and the takeover of the embassy, Iranian fundamentalists increasingly saw even routine contact between Bazargan's provisional government and U.S. officials, both in Tehran and abroad, as part of a CIA plot to undermine Khomeini, derail the Islamic revolution, and restore the Shah to power. Their fears were not irrational. The CIA had done something very similar in 1953, when its station chief, Kermit Roosevelt, orchestrated the collapse of an elected government under Prime Minister Muhammad Mosaddeq, and put the Shah on the throne. These actions had shaped the next quarter century of Iranian life. When the United States decided to admit the ailing exiled Shah for medical treatment, in late October of 1979, the students saw history repeating itself.

But they were wrong. The Shah *was* terminally ill with cancer, and Carter's decision to allow him treatment in the United States appears to have been purely humanitarian. In November of 1979 the United States had no intention—nor was it capable—of returning the Shah to the throne. As the famous documents seized in the embassy would eventually show, the American spy presence in Iran was at a pitifully low ebb. Only three CIA officers were in the country: Tom Ahern, the station chief; and two undercover operatives, Bill Daugherty and Malcolm Kalp. None of these men even spoke Farsi, and none had been in the country for longer than four months; Kalp had been in Tehran less than a week when the embassy was taken.

U.S. intelligence activities inside Iran during the previous twenty years had been directed primarily at the Soviet Union—and entailed mostly the monitoring of missile tests from bases along Iran's northern border. The warehouse base-

ment where the *gerogan-girha* initially stashed most of the hostages—who called it the Mushroom Inn—had been built to house data-processing and communications equipment for those listening posts. Iran, as a staunch American ally, was not even a minor target for intelligence gathering. There is no better proof of this than the way the CIA was blindsided by the revolution. No one in Washington saw it coming.

After the revolution the CIA seemed to be largely groping for some understanding of the new regime taking shape in Tehran. Not that the Agency lacked bad intentions. Down the road it was hoping to at least nudge the revolution in a pro-American direction. A top-secret cable to the CIA director, Stansfield Turner, taken from Ahern's desk on the day of the takeover (he had neglected to shred it), summarized the station chief's goals and accomplishments.

You asked me to comment at some point about our prospects for influencing the course of events. Only marginally, I would say, until the military recovers, and that is a process we can do almost nothing to affect. What we can do, and I am now working on, is to identify and prepare to support the potential leaders of a coalition of westernized political liberals, moderate religious figures, and (when they begin to emerge) western-oriented military leaders.

Hardly the stuff of a counter coup. Still, the *gerogan-girha* did their best to paint the documents they seized as proof of their darkest suspicions, and to this day most of them insist that the embassy seizure did thwart active plots against the revolution.

Iran is still very much in the grip of CIA-phobia, which has spawned a national industry of conspiracy theories. One of the more breathtaking of these holds—and the irony here is apparently lost on most Iranians—that the embassy seizure was actually orchestrated by the CIA. In other words, the *gerogan-girha* were nothing but CIA stooges. How else to explain the world of trouble that followed the hostage crisis—the economic stagnation; the crackdowns on free speech; the constant patrols of the religious police; the jailing, torture, and even execution of political dissidents; the eight-year war with Iraq; the isolation from the international community?

Reza Ghapour, a fundamentalist scholar who was born the year before the embassy takeover, recently published a book that attempted to prove this theory of its origins. When I interviewed him in December, he told me with a straight face and a strong voice that the CIA had been responsible not only for installing and preserving the Shah but also for engineering his overthrow *and* secretly planning his return, for propping up the provisional government that followed the coup *and* fomenting the national unrest that ultimately undermined and toppled it, and for secretly orchestrating the seizure of the Den of Spies and keeping fifty-two Americans (three of them initially trapped at the Iranian Foreign Ministry) hostage for more than a year.

"Aren't some of these things mutually contradictory?" I

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asked. "For instance, why would the CIA wish to foment trouble for a provisional government it was secretly supporting?"

The slender, bearded Chapour smiled at me with sweet condescension. "You must view the world through the lens of Islam to see the logic of these things," he said.

I heard the same general theory in slightly different form any number of times. Once was from Abolhassan Bani-Sadr, the former President of Iran, who was elected during the hostage crisis and eventually fled to Paris, accused of being a CIA agent himself. Bani-Sadr, who still lives in Paris, under around-the-clock protection by the French police, is of the school that believes earth-shattering events do not happen spontaneously; he finds it hard to accept that a group of college students by themselves cooked up a protest that had such profound consequences for Iran—not to mention his own life.

I also heard the theory from a liberal magazine editor, a critic of the current regime, who did not want to be named. A worn-looking middle-aged man with a concave face and tobacco stains on his fingertips, he argued fiercely, "If you consider the event backwards, from where we are today to the point twenty-five years ago when the takeover took place, and you consider who was hurt most by it and who most benefited from it, then you would have to conclude that the answer is Iran in the first place and America in the second place." The United States has gained, he said, by impeding the progress of the world's first self-styled Islamic republic.

He went on for a while longer, filling in some of the wilder possibilities of his hypothesis, and then waited with a pleased look on his face as the whole torrent of Farsi was conveyed by my interpreter. I said nothing in response, so he told the interpreter to ask me, "What do you think?"

"I think you're crackers," I said.

My interpreter looked at me quizzically.

"Just use the word 'crackers,'" I told him.

The surviving *gerogan-girha* who have prospered most in the mullahocracy are regarded by many Iranians as opportunists, and the most tempting targets for this label are Muhammad Hashemi, who just retired as first deputy of the Ministry of Intelligence and Security, and his wife, Massoumeh Ebtekar, the Minister of the Environment. (If the smoggy skies of Tehran are any indication, Ebtekar has done her job with a notable lack of success.) They are Iran's premier power couple. As one might expect, both regard the embassy takeover as an unadulterated success. They promptly agreed to see me separately when I visited Iran in December.

I found Hashemi in an office several flights up from a noisy, bustling street in downtown Tehran. It was a chilly, wet, dreary day, and he served the customary small glasses of tea and chatted animatedly in front of a big color map of the world. Over the years Hashemi has grown thick and wide, with great round cheeks, a goatee framing large, pout-

ing lips, and a wild spray of bushy gray hair. Self-assured, even imperious, Hashemi defends not only what he and the other hostage-takers did but also how they did it.

"We knew that there is an end to everything, like there is peace after every war," Hashemi told me. "We wanted it to be a hostage-taking without any kind of harshness and scuffle, unique in history, a hostage-taking that represented a nation and its concerns, and that is what we are proud of."

Hashemi's key role in the takeover turned out to have been a good career move. Early in 1979 he was a college student majoring in film at Tehran Polytechnic University, but after the Shah's ouster he had abandoned his studies to devote himself full-time to the revolution—joining not only Asgharzadeh's student group but also a far more violent band of militants inside the Revolutionary Guards, who had become the enforcers of the mullahocracy. After the hostage crisis ended, with the release of the Americans, Hashemi and several of the other Revolutionary Guard participants went on to found the new regime's Ministry of Intelligence and Security. Today it is the country's much feared and omnipresent central spy agency, which answers not to the President or the Majlis but to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. In the years after the embassy takeover Hashemi's ministry conducted the vicious purges that broke the back of domestic opposition to mullah rule, and hunted down and assassinated enemies of the revolution overseas.

As one of the ringleaders of the embassy takeover, Hashemi recruited Ebtekar to join the *gerogan-girha* in the early hours of the crisis. He knew that, having lived in a suburb of Philadelphia as a child, she spoke fluent English. Ebtekar became the best known of the *gerogan-girha*, because, with her American-accented English, she was the natural choice to be the group's mouthpiece. Known as "Mother Mary" and "Screaming Mary," she was especially disliked by many of the hostages, in part because her accent made her seem like a turncoat, a "Tokyo Rose," in part because of her endless propagandizing. She would saunter through the captured embassy with a camera crew in tow, urging the hostages to describe their ordeal in upbeat terms. "You have been treated well, haven't you?" was her constant refrain. During one such filming session, in the final days of captivity, Army Sergeant Regis Regan got so fed up with Ebtekar that he let loose with a stream of invective and was dragged into a hallway for a beating. Another former hostage, Michael Metrisko, one of the embassy's political officers, summed up his feelings about Ebtekar this way: "If she were on fire on the street, I wouldn't piss on her to put it out."

Ebtekar has written a book called *Takeover in Tehran*, which is the best explanation I've read of what motivated her and the other *gerogan-girha*, and which colorfully evokes the naive, heady romanticism of the era. The book, which has been published in Iran and in other countries

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around the world, is available in English in the United States, thanks to a Canadian publisher.

"Did you know that no American publisher would publish my book?" Ebtekar asked me, when we met in a conference room in the Ministry of the Environment's headquarters. A chronic didact, she was wrapped from head to toe in the same manner as the Sisters of Mercy who taught me in grammar school. She blamed her failure to find an American publisher squarely on U.S. government censorship.

"We approached fifty major American publishers through a well-respected literary agent in New York," she said. All of them rejected it.

"There are publishers in the United States who specialize in publishing tracts against the United States government," I said.

"Not big publishers," she said.

"No, they're not," I replied. "Big publishing houses tend to buy books that they think will sell well enough to make a profit. I suspect they didn't think yours would."

Ebtekar wasn't buying it. As a member in good standing of the Iranian government for many years, she found perfect sense in the notion of government censorship. Revisiting the embassy takeover, she reverted to the old lecturing, holier-than-thou manner about which I had heard so much from the hostages, and which anyone would find annoying.

The hostage-takers of 1979 were striving toward *umma*, a perfect Muslim community. Now they live in the ruins of their dream. The admiration they once enjoyed has faded like the graffiti at the Den of Spies.

"If the real truth had been reported, things would have gone differently," Ebtekar said, adding that if the U.S. government had not kept "the real story" from the American public, the *gerogan-girha's* decision to imprison the American diplomats, office workers, and Marines and threaten them with trial and execution would have been supported in the United States. She was just getting warmed up. "Because if you go back to the basics, if you go back to the principles, if you go back to the Declaration of Independence of America, the Constitution, what the students were speaking about were common values, values that are appreciated by people in America, in Iran, in Europe." I began to feel a sudden kinship with Michael Metrinko.

Just days after this conversation, during a stopover in London on my way home, I turned on the TV in my hotel room and was startled to see Ebtekar's tightly wrapped face. She was being interviewed by a CNN announcer

on a split screen with Iran's newly anointed Nobel Peace Prize winner, Shirin Ebadi, a lawyer, a feminist, and a human-rights activist. Ebtekar was talking about how proud everyone in Iran was of Ebadi, even though Ebadi is widely known as a determined critic of the regime—indeed, her award was a symbolic blow against the government's repressive policies.

Under Iran's theologically inspired laws, women are not allowed to travel without permission from their husbands. The CNN announcer asked the Iranian Vice President how she could defend such a system.

If Ebtekar squirmed, it was only for a split second. She smiled and smoothly segued into a windy recitation of the gains women had made under Iran's Islamic regime.

Several days before, it had occurred to me as I finished my interview with her husband that his willingness to talk to me might reflect an ulterior motive. It seems that he and his wife were heavily invested in an ambitious new vacation resort on the Caspian Sea called Cham Paradise. Hashemi showed me slick brochures and advertisements for the venture, printed in both Farsi and English; they were evidently designed to attract foreign visitors as well as Iranians. He boldly predicted that soon there would be a significant thaw in relations between Iran and the Western world, including the United States. The resort project seemed to rest in large part on that dubious proposition. Hashemi was clearly excited as he showed me a detailed model of the project—a cluster of modern apartment buildings, hotels, villas, restaurants, lakes, and other features arrayed on the tip of a peninsula. Then he had an idea.

"Perhaps, in a few years," he said, "we might invite back the Americans we held hostage, and they can all stay at the resort as our guests!"

"This time, can they go home when they want?" I asked, and waited for my interpreter to relay the question to him.

Listening to the Farsi, Hashemi first scowled, and then reeled with laughter. He said to me in English, "You make a joke!"

By the time I returned to Iran in August, Cham Paradise had gone bust. Hashemi and Ebtekar had been forced to sell their home to pay off their debts, and the two were living with her mother—somehow, one suspects, blaming the United States for their troubles. They were not the only *gerogan-girha* true believers who had fallen on hard times. When I tried to reach Hussein Sheikh al-Islam, the chief interrogator and the man that the former CIA station chief Tom Ahern (among others) remembers beating him with a rubber hose, I was informed by al-Islam's brother that he refused to speak to an American writer—for two reasons. The first, his brother said, was that he believes an American could never understand the "mysticisms" of the *gerogan-giri*. The second was that al-Islam blames the United States for thwarting his ambition to become a prominent Iranian diplomat. It seems that the only country that would accept him was Syria, historically a partner in terrorism with Iran.

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On my last day in Tehran I visited the Den of Spies one more time. I was accompanied by David Keane, a filmmaker who is shooting a documentary in tandem with my reporting about the hostage crisis. David (who is also my cousin) wanted to shoot some film inside the compound and inside the old embassy building itself. We stopped at the by now familiar guardhouse on the southeast corner, and to our surprise, it had been spruced up. The walls and ceiling looked as if they'd been given a new coat of paint, the boot prints had vanished, and the broken-down furniture had been replaced. Another bored-looking team of young Revolutionary Guards—this time a threesome—sat sullenly behind the marble-veneered reception counter. Yes, we had an appointment. Yes, we had papers—Ramin held up an imposing document with multiple important-looking signatures. One of the guards rang up a superior to announce our arrival, and we sat down to wait for an escort inside.

We sat for hours before a mid-level official in the management of the compound arrived at the guardhouse. A worried-looking man in an open-collared pale-blue shirt, he said we would be permitted to walk through the exhibit, but no filming would be allowed. Our appointment, our document with the important signatures, did not seem to matter.

"It's an exhibit," I argued. "The whole idea is for people to see it. If we film it, millions of people will."

On our visit in December we had overcome initial resistance to allowing us into the exhibit with a small *reshveh*, or tip (literally translated, "success fee"), at which point we were given a bang-up tour. But David had had no video camera that day. We suggested that Ramin offer another *reshveh*. No, Ramin said, management of the compound had turned over since our last visit, and the officials now in charge were new to the job and too nervous to bend the rules. Blue Shirt disappeared, and we waited another hour before he came back with exciting news: we would be allowed to film inside the exhibit hall, but David would have to use the officials' own video camera. This prompted further discussion. What kind of camera did they have? Would it be compatible with the digital cassettes David used in his camera? Blue Shirt left to investigate, and returned to report sadly that they could not find their camera. "You will have to hire a camera," he said.

"But I have a camera!" David shouted, holding up his Sony model. "You can inspect it if you like."

Even the Revolutionary Guards behind the counter felt our frustration, and they joined in the argument. "What's the big deal?" one said. "Let them take pictures with their camera."

Blue Shirt was insistent: no, the camera would have to be rented.

Later, just as a search party was about to head off to find a camera-rental shop, another administrator came running out with the announcement that the official camera had at last been located. So after a long day of waiting, David

and I were finally escorted into the compound. We passed through a small pine grove, walked past the old white two-story ambassador's residence, where most of the hostages had spent their first days in captivity, and then were led into a small new administrative building in the back of the compound, where tennis courts had once been. After all the back-and-forth the official camera turned out to be a Sony—exactly the same model that David was carrying. We exchanged a round of handshakes and thank-yous with our hosts and set off for the embassy building exhibit to begin taping.

We had gone about ten steps when Blue Shirt came running back out. "No," he cried. "It has been decided that you can only take still pictures—no moving pictures."

That was when we gave up. We had already taken still pictures, on our earlier visit. As we made our way out of the compound, crossing the sidewalk onto Taleghani Avenue to hail a cab, the three young Revolutionary Guards came running after us. We wondered for a minute if the procedures were going to change yet again.

The guards all spoke to Ramin in Farsi, smiling and gesturing toward us, and then he relayed their comments: "They want me to tell you that they are embarrassed, that they think this is silly. They want to apologize on behalf of their country."

Ramin grinned as the soldiers huddled around him, grabbing at him in a friendly way. "They want me to tell you that they love America."

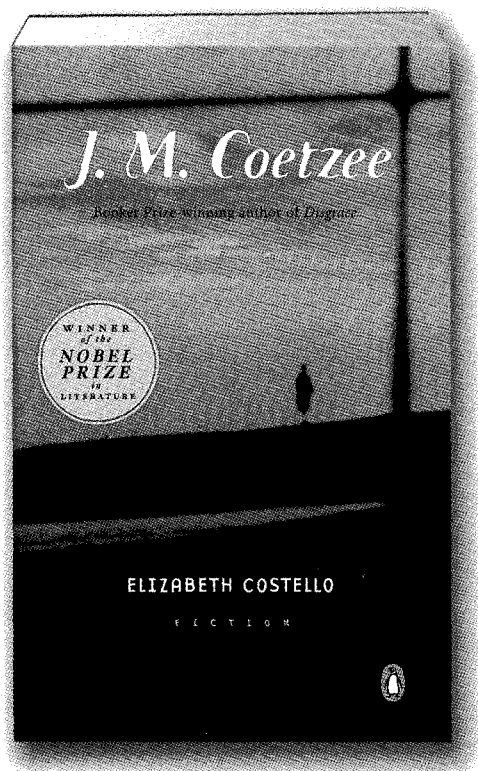
The soldiers flashed big smiles at us and nodded approvingly. And right there in front of the DEATH TO THE USA sign, in front of the faded banners denouncing "The Great Satan," one of the Revolutionary Guards raised his thumb high into the air and said in halting English, "Okay, George W. Bush!"

So things have not worked out quite as the *gerogan-girha* planned. They have arrived in a new century with the varying perspectives of middle age. The righteous and successful see every step on their path as a correct one, and the righteous but disappointed still have an old enemy to blame. Those with misgivings concede the missteps of their youth, which they regret but cannot fully disown. They failed to create the world they dreamed of, but that is an old story. Some now accept the blame, or at least a big responsibility, for things they would like to change.

Still, even among those who now despair over the long-term consequences of the hostage crisis, I noticed a lift in mood when they talked about those stirring, intense, and dangerous days. No matter how it turned out for them, whether it made them proud or bitter, whether they feel they deserve international praise or scorn, for one long year they had the world's most powerful nation by the throat. At the center of the world's stage, for better or for worse, they danced a joyful and defiant dance. ▀

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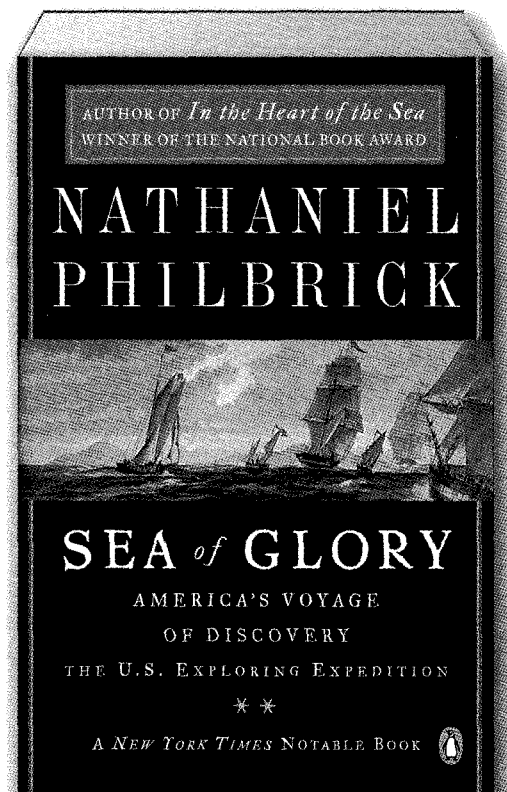
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Soldiers, spies, and diplomats conduct a classic Pentagon war game—with sobering results

BY JAMES FALLOWS

Illustrations by Polly Becker

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Throughout this summer and fall, barely mentioned in America's presidential campaign, Iran moved steadily closer to a showdown with the United States (and other countries) over its nuclear plans.

In June the International Atomic Energy Agency said that Iran had not been forthcoming about the extent of its nuclear programs. In July, Iran indicated that it would not ratify a protocol of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty giving inspectors greater liberty within its borders. In August the Iranian Defense Minister warned that if Iran suspected a foreign power—specifically the United States or Israel—of preparing to strike its emerging nuclear facilities, it might launch a pre-emptive

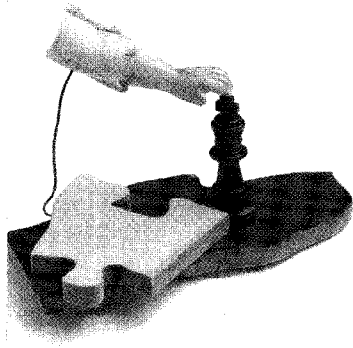
strike of its own, of which one target could be the U.S. forces next door in Iraq. In September, Iran announced that it was preparing thirty-seven tons of uranium for enrichment, supposedly for power plants, and it took an even tougher line against the IAEA. In October it announced that it had missiles capable of hitting targets 1,250 miles away—as far as southeastern Europe to the west and India

to the east. Also, an Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman rejected a proposal by Senator John Kerry that if the United States promised to supply all the nuclear fuel Iran needed for peaceful power-generating purposes, Iran would stop developing enrichment facilities (which could also help it build weapons). Meanwhile, the

James Fallows, a national correspondent for The Atlantic, has written three recent cover stories on U.S. foreign policy and Iraq: "Bush's Lost Year" (October), "Blind Into Baghdad" (January/February), and "The Fifty-first State?" (November 2002).

government of Israel kept sending subtle and not-so-subtle warnings that if Iran went too far with its plans, Israel would act first to protect itself, as it had in 1981 by bombing the Iraqi nuclear facility at Osirak.

Preoccupied as they were with Iraq (and with refigh-ting Vietnam), the presidential candidates did not spend much time on Iran. But after the election the winner will have no choice. The decisions that a President will have to make about Iran are like those that involve Iraq—but harder. A regime at odds with the United States, and suspected of encouraging Islamic terrorists, is believed to be developing very destructive weapons. In Iran's case, however, the governmental hostility to the United States is longer-standing (the United States implicitly backed Saddam Hussein during the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s), the ties to terrorist groups are clearer, and the evidence of an ongoing nuclear-weapons program is stronger. Iran is bigger, more powerful, and richer than Iraq, and it enjoys more international legitimacy than Iraq ever did under Saddam Hussein. The motives and goals of Iran's mullah govern-



The presidential candidates did not spend much time on Iran and its nuclear threat. But the winner will have no choice. The decisions will be like those that involve Iraq—but harder.

ment have been even harder for U.S. intelligence agencies to understand and predict than Saddam Hussein's were. And Iran is deeply involved in America's ongoing predicament in Iraq. Shiites in Iran maintain close cultural and financial contacts with Iraqi Shiite communities on the other side of the nearly 1,000-mile border between the countries. So far Iraq's Shiites have generally been less resistant to the U.S. occupation than its Sunnis. Most American experts believe that if it wanted to, Iran could incite Iraqi Shiites to join the insurgency in far greater numbers.

As a preview of the problems Iran will pose for the next American President, and of the ways in which that President might respond, *The Atlantic* conducted a war game this fall, simulating preparations for a U.S. assault on Iran.

"War game" is a catchall term used by the military to cover a wide range of exercises. Some games run for weeks and involve real troops maneuvering across oceans or terrain against others playing the role of the enemy force. Some are computerized simulations of aerial, maritime, or land warfare. Others are purely talking-and-thinking processes, in which a group of people in a room try to work

out the best solution to a hypothetical crisis. Sometimes participants are told to stay "in role"—to say and do only what a Secretary of State or an Army brigade commander or an enemy strategist would most likely say and do in a given situation. Other times they are told to express their own personal views. What the exercises have in common is the attempt to simulate many aspects of conflict—operational, strategic, diplomatic, emotional, and psychological—without the cost, carnage, and irreversibility of real war. The point of a war game is to learn from simulated mistakes in order to avoid making them if conflict actually occurs.

Our exercise was stripped down to the essentials. It took place in one room, it ran for three hours, and it dealt strictly with how an American President might respond, militarily or otherwise, to Iran's rapid progress toward developing nuclear weapons. It wasn't meant to explore every twist or repercussion of past U.S. actions and future U.S. approaches to Iran. Reports of that nature are proliferating more rapidly than weapons.

Rather, we were looking for what Sam Gardiner, a retired Air Force colonel, has called the "clarifying effect" of intense immersion in simulated decision-making. Such simulations are Gardiner's specialty. For more than two decades he has conducted war games at the National War College and many other military institutions. Starting in 1989, two years before the Gulf War and fourteen years

before Operation Iraqi Freedom, he created and ran at least fifty exercises involving an attack on Iraq. The light-force strategy that General Tommy Franks used to take Baghdad last year first surfaced in a war game Gardiner designed in the 1980s. In 2002, as the real invasion of Iraq drew near, Gardiner worked as a private citizen to develop nonclassified simulations of the situation that would follow the fall of Baghdad. These had little effect on U.S. policy, but proved to be prescient about the main challenges in restoring order to Iraq.

Gardiner told me that the war games he has run as a military instructor frequently accomplish as much as several standard lectures or panel discussions do in helping participants think through the implications of their decisions and beliefs. For our purposes he designed an exercise to force attention on the three or four main issues the next President will have to face about Iran, without purporting to answer all the questions the exercise raised.

The scenario he set was an imagined meeting of the "Principals Committee"—that is, the most senior national-security officials of the next Administration. The meeting would occur as soon as either Administration was ready to deal with Iran, but after a November meeting of the IAEA.

In the real world the IAEA is in fact meeting in November, and has set a deadline for Iran to satisfy its demands by the time of the meeting. For the purposes of the simulation Iran is assumed to have defied the deadline. That is a safe bet in the real world as well.

And so our group of principals gathered, to provide their best judgment to the President. Each of them had direct experience in making similar decisions. In the role of CIA director was David Kay, who after the Gulf War went to Iraq as the chief nuclear-weapons inspector for the IAEA and the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM), and went back in June of 2003 to lead the search for weapons of mass destruction. Kay resigned that post in January of this year, after concluding that there had been no weapons stockpiles at the time of the war.

Playing Secretary of State were Kenneth Pollack, of the Brookings Institution, and Reuel Marc Gerecht, of the American Enterprise Institute. Although neither is active in partisan politics (nor is anyone else who served on the panel), the views they expressed about Iran in our discussion were fairly distinct, with Gerecht playing a more Republican role in the discussions, and Pollack a more Democratic one. (This was the war game's one attempt to allow for different outcomes in the election.)

Both Pollack and Gerecht are veterans of the CIA. Pollack was a CIA Iran-Iraq analyst for seven years, and later served as the National Security Council's director for Persian Gulf affairs during the last two years of the Clinton Administration. In 2002 his book *The Threatening Storm: The Case for Invading Iraq* was highly influential in warning about the long-term weapons threat posed by Saddam Hussein. (Last January, in this magazine, Pollack examined how pre-war intelligence had gone wrong.) His book about U.S.-Iranian tensions, *The Persian Puzzle*, has just been published. Gerecht worked for nine years in the CIA's Directorate of Operations, where he recruited agents in the Middle East. In 1997, under the pseudonym Edward Shirley, he published *Know Thine Enemy: A Spy's Journey Into Revolutionary Iran*, which described a clandestine trip. He has written frequently about Iran, Afghanistan, and the craft of intelligence for this and other publications.

The simulated White House chief of staff was Kenneth Bacon, the chief Pentagon spokesman during much of the Clinton Administration, who is now the head of Refugees International. Before the invasion Bacon was closely involved in preparing for postwar humanitarian needs in Iraq.

Finally, the Secretary of Defense was Michael Mazarr, a professor of national-security strategy at the National War College, who has written about preventing nuclear proliferation in Iran, among other countries, and has collaborated with Gardiner on previous war games.

This war game was loose about requiring players to stay "in role." Sometimes the participants expressed their institu-

tions' views; other times they stepped out of role and spoke for themselves. Gardiner usually sat at the conference table with the five others and served as National Security Adviser, pushing his panel to resolve their disagreements and decide on recommendations for the President. Occasionally he stepped into other roles at a briefing podium. For instance, as the general in charge of Central Command (CENTCOM)—the equivalent of Tommy Franks before the Iraq War and John Abizaid now—he explained detailed military plans.

Over the years Gardiner has concluded that role-playing exercises usually work best if the participants feel they are onstage, being observed; this makes them take everything more seriously and try harder to perform. So the exercise was videotaped, and several people were invited to watch and comment on it. One was Graham Allison, of Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, a leading scholar of presidential decision-making, who served as a Pentagon official in the first Clinton Administration, specializing in nuclear-arms control. His *Essence of Decision*, a study of how the Kennedy Administration handled the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, is the classic work in its field; his latest book, which includes a discussion of Iran, is *Nuclear Terrorism: The Ultimate Preventable Catastrophe*. Two other observers were active-duty officers: Marine Corps Colonel Thomas X. Hammes, who has specialized in counterinsurgency and whose book about dealing with Iran (and many other challenges), *The Sling and the Stone*, was published this summer; and Army Major Donald Vandergriff, whose most recent book, about reforming the internal culture of the Army, is *The Path to Victory* (2002). The fourth observer was Herbert Striner, formerly of the Brookings Institution, who as a young analyst at an Army think-tank, Operations Research Organization, led a team devising limited-war plans for Iran—back in the 1950s. Striner's team developed scenarios for one other regional war as well: in French Indochina, later known as Vietnam.

Promptly at nine o'clock one Friday morning in September, Gardiner called his group of advisers to order. In his role as National Security Adviser he said that over the next three hours they needed to agree on options and recommendations to send to the President in the face of Iran's latest refusal to meet demands and the latest evidence of its progress toward nuclear weaponry. Gardiner had already decided what questions not to ask. One was whether the United States could tolerate Iran's emergence as a nuclear power. That is, should Iran be likened to Saddam Hussein's Iraq, in whose possession nuclear weapons would pose an unacceptable threat, or to Pakistan, India, or even North Korea, whose nuclear ambitions the United States regrets but has decided to live with for now? If that discussion were to begin, it would leave time for nothing else.

Gardiner also chose to avoid posing directly the main question the game was supposed to illuminate: whether and

when the United States should seriously consider military action against Iran. If he started with that question, Gardiner said, any experienced group of officials would tell him to first be sure he had exhausted the diplomatic options. So in order to force discussion about what, exactly, a military “solution” would mean, Gardiner structured the game to determine how the panel assessed evidence of the threat from Iran; whether it was willing to recommend steps that would keep the option of military action open, and what that action might look like; and how it would make the case for a potential military strike to an audience in the United States and around the world.

Before the game began, Gardiner emphasized one other point about his approach, the importance of which would become clear when the discussions were over. He had taken pains to make the material he would present as accurate, realistic, and true to standard national-security practice as possible. None of it was classified, but all of it reflected the most plausible current nonclassified information he could obtain. The detailed plans for an assault on Iran had also been carefully devised. They reflected the present state of Pentagon thinking about the importance of technology, information networks, and Special Forces operations. Afterward participants who had sat through real briefings of this sort said that Gardiner’s version was authentic.

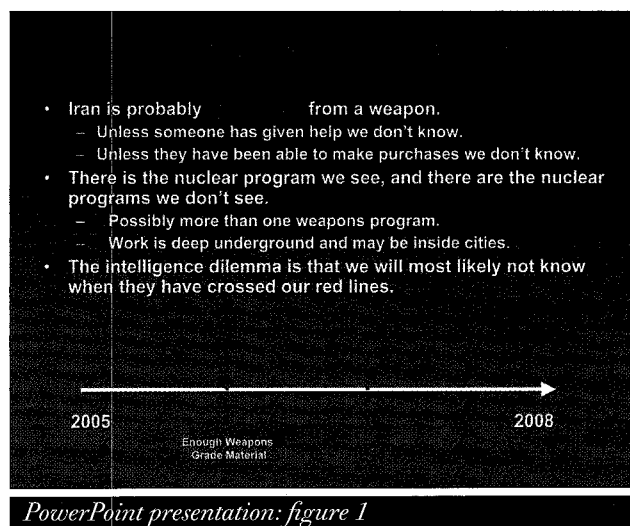
His commitment to realism extended to presenting all his information in a series of PowerPoint slides, on which U.S. military planners are so dependent that it is hard to imagine how Dwight Eisenhower pulled off D-Day without them. PowerPoint’s imperfections as a deliberative tool are well known. Its formulaic outline structure can over-emphasize some ideas or options and conceal others, and the amateurish graphic presentation of data often impedes understanding. But any simulation of a modern military exercise would be unconvincing without it. Gardiner’s presentation used PowerPoint for its explanatory function and as a spine for discussion, its best use; several of the slides have been reproduced for this article.

In his first trip to the podium Gardiner introduced himself as the director of central intelligence. (That was David Kay’s role too, but during this phase he just sat and listened.) His assignment was to explain what U.S. intelligence knew and didn’t know about Iran’s progress toward nuclear weapons, and what it thought about possible impediments to that progress—notably Israel’s potential to launch a pre-emptive attack on Iran’s nuclear sites.

“As DCI, I’ve got to talk about uncertainty,” Gardiner began—the way future intelligence officers presumably will after the Iraq-WMD experience, when George Tenet, as CIA director, claimed that the case for Iraq’s having weapons was a “slam-dunk.” “It’s an important part of this problem. The [intelligence] community believes that Iran could have a nuclear weapon in three years.” He let that sink in and then added ominously, “*Unless* they have something we

don’t know about, or unless someone has given them or sold them something we don’t know about”—or unless, on top of these “known unknowns,” some “unknown unknowns” were speeding the pace of Iran’s program.

One response to imperfect data about an adversary is to assume the worst and prepare for it, so that any other outcome is a happy surprise. That was the recommendation of Reuel Gerecht, playing the conservative Secretary of State. “We should assume Iran will move as fast as possible,” he said several times. “It would be negligent of any American strategic planners to assume a slower pace.” But that was not necessarily what the DCI was driving at in underscoring the limits of outside knowledge about Iran. Mainly he meant to emphasize a complication the United States would face in making its decisions. Given Iran’s clear intent to build a bomb, and given the progress it has already made, sometime in the next two or three years it will cross a series of “red lines,” after which the program will be much harder for outsiders to stop. Gardiner illustrated with a slide (figure 1).



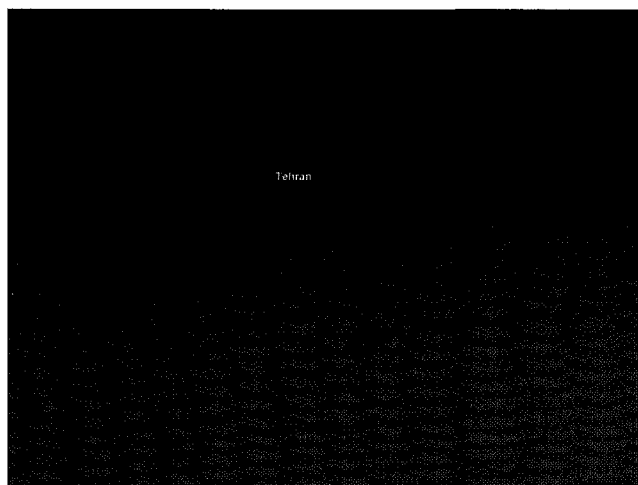
Iran will cross one of the red lines when it produces enough enriched uranium for a bomb, and another when it has weapons in enough places that it would be impossible to remove them in one strike. “Here’s the intelligence dilemma,” Gardiner said. “We are facing a future in which this is probably Iran’s primary national priority. And we have these red lines in front of us, and we”—meaning the intelligence agencies—“won’t be able to tell you when they cross them.” Hazy knowledge about Iran’s nuclear progress doesn’t dictate assuming the worst, Gardiner said. But it does mean that time is not on America’s side. At some point, relatively soon, Iran will have an arsenal that no outsiders can destroy, and America will not know in advance when that point has arrived.

Then the threat assessment moved to two wild-card factors: Iran’s current involvement in Iraq, and Israel’s potential involvement with Iran. Both complicate and constrain the options open to the United States, Gardiner said.

Iran's influence on the Shiite areas of Iraq is broad, deep, and obviously based on a vastly greater knowledge of the people and customs than the United States can bring to bear. So far Iran has seemed to share America's interest in calming the Shiite areas, rather than have them erupt on its border. But if it needs a way to make trouble for the United States, one is at hand.

As for Israel, no one can be sure what it will do if threatened. Yet from the U.S. perspective, it looks as if a successful pre-emptive raid might be impossible—or at least so risky as to give the most determined Israeli planners pause. Partly this is because of the same lack of knowledge that handicaps the United States. When Menachem Begin dispatched Israeli fighter planes to destroy Iraq's Osirak plant, he knew there was only one target, and that if it was eliminated, Iraq's nuclear program would be set back for many years. In our scenario as in real life, the Americans thought Ariel Sharon and his successors could not be sure how many important targets were in Iran, or exactly where all of them were, or whether Israel could destroy enough of them to make the

On one point there was concord. Despite Gardiner's emphasis on the tentative nature of the intelligence, the principals said it was sufficient to demonstrate the gravity of the threat. David Kay, a real-life nuclear inspector who was now the DCI at the table, said that comparisons with Iraq were important—and underscored how difficult the Iranian problem would be. "It needs to be emphasized," he said, "that the bases for conclusions about Iran are different, and we think stronger than they were with regard to Iraq." He explained that international inspectors withdrew from Iraq in 1998, so outsiders had suspicions rather than hard knowledge about what was happening. In Iran inspectors had been present throughout, and had seen evidence of the "clandestine and very difficult-to-penetrate nature of the program," which "leaves no doubt that it is designed for a nuclear-weapons program." What is worse, he said, "this is a lot more dangerous than the Iraqi program, in that the Iranians have proven, demonstrated connections with very vicious international terrorist regimes who have shown their willingness to use

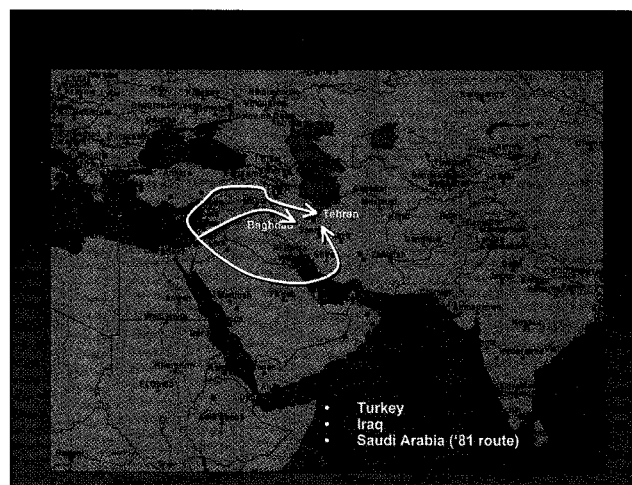


PowerPoint presentation: figure 2

raid worth the international outrage and the likely counterattack. Plus, operationally it would be hard.

But for the purposes of our scenario, Israel kept up its threats to take unilateral action. It was time again for PowerPoint. Figure 2 shows the *known* targets that might be involved in some way in Iran's nuclear program. And figure 3 shows the route Israeli warplanes would have to take to get to them. Osirak, near Baghdad, was by comparison practically next door, and the Israeli planes made the round trip without refueling. To get to Iran, Israeli planes would have to fly over Saudi Arabia and Jordan, probably a *casus belli* in itself given current political conditions; or over Turkey, also a problem; or over American-controlled Iraq, which would require (and signal) U.S. approval of the mission.

With this the DCI left the podium—and Sam Gardiner, now sitting at the table as National Security Adviser, asked what initial assessments the principals made of the Iranian threat.



PowerPoint presentation: figure 3

any weapons they acquire" against the United States and its allies. Others spoke in the same vein.

The real debate concerned Israel. The less America worried about reaction from Europe and the Muslim world, the more likely it was to encourage or condone Israeli action, in the hope that Israel could solve the problem on its own. The more it worried about long-term relations with the Arab world, the more determined it would be to discourage the Israelis from acting.

Most of the principals thought the Israelis were bluffing, and that their real goal was to put pressure on the United States to act. "It's hard to fault them for making this threat," said Pollack, as the Democratic Secretary of State, "because in the absence of Israeli pressure how seriously would the United States be considering this option? Based on my discussions with the Israelis, I think they know they don't have the technical expertise to deal with this problem. I think they know they just don't have

the planes to get there—setting aside every other problem.”

“They might be able to get there—the problem would be getting home,” retorted Gerecht, who had the most positive view on the usefulness of an Israeli strike.

Bacon, as White House chief of staff, said, “Unless they can take out every single Iranian missile, they know they will get a relatively swift counterattack, perhaps with chemical weapons. So the threat they want to eliminate won’t be eliminated.” Both he and Pollack recommended that the Administration ask the Israelis to pipe down.

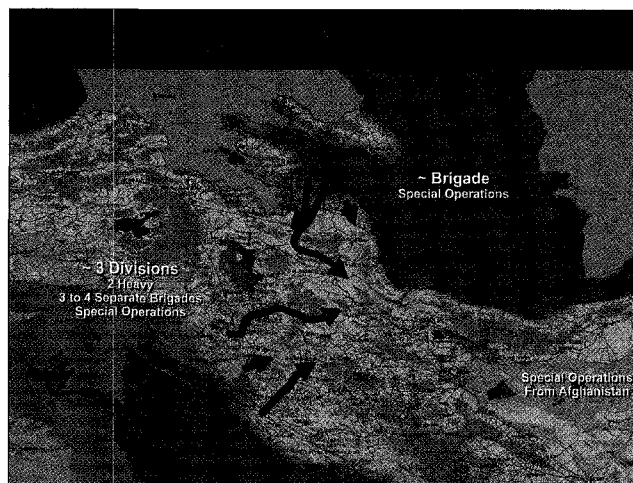
“There are two things we’ve got to remember with regard to the Israelis,” Kay said. “First of all, if we tell them anything, they are certain to play it back through their network that we are ‘bringing pressure to bear’ on them. That has been a traditional Israeli response. It’s the nature of a free democracy that they will do that. The second thing we’ve got to be careful of and might talk to the Israelis about: our intelligence estimate that we have three years to operate could change if the Iranians thought the Israelis might pre-empt sooner. We’d like to have that full three years, if not more. So when we’re talking with the Israelis, toning down their rhetoric can be described as a means of dealing with the threat.”

Woven in and out of this discussion was a parallel consideration of Iraq: whether, and how, Iran might undermine America’s interests there or target its troops. Pollack said this was of great concern. “We have an enormous commitment to Iraq, and we can’t afford to allow Iraq to fail,” he said. “One of the interesting things that I’m going to ask the CENTCOM commander when we hear his presentation is, Can he maintain even the current level of security in



The U.S. government has no way of knowing exactly how many sites Iran has, or how many it would be able to destroy, or how much time that would buy.

Iraq, which of course is absolutely dismal, and still have the troops available for anything in Iran?” As it happened, the question never came up in just this form in the stage of the game that featured a simulated CENTCOM commander. But Pollack’s concern about the strain on U.S. military resources was shared by the other panelists. “The second side of the problem,” Pollack continued, “is that one of the things we have going for us in Iraq, if I can use that term, is that the Iranians really have not made a major effort to thwart us ... If they wanted to make our lives rough in Iraq, they could make Iraq hell.” Provoking Iran in any way, therefore, could mean even fewer troops to handle Iraq—and even worse problems for them to deal with.



PowerPoint presentation: figure 4

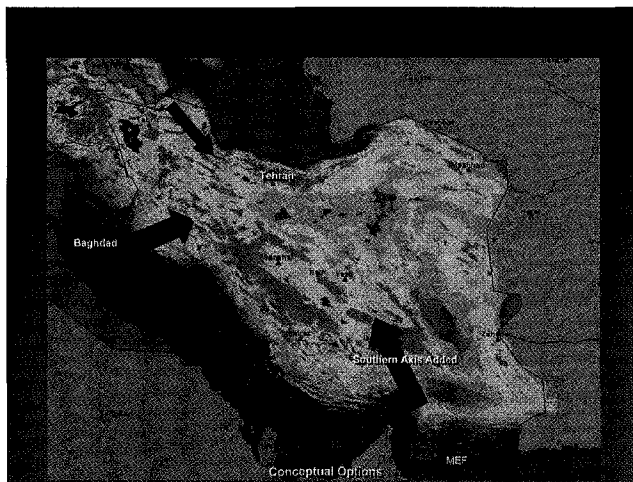
Kay agreed. “They may decide that a bloody defeat for the United States, even if it means chaos in Iraq, is something they actually would prefer. Iranians are a terribly strategic political culture ... They might well accelerate their destabilization operation, in the belief that their best reply to us is to ensure that we have to go to helicopters and evacuate the Green Zone.”

More views were heard—Gerecht commented, for example, on the impossibility of knowing the real intentions of the Iranian government—before Gardiner called a halt to this first phase of the exercise. He asked for a vote on one specific recommendation to the President: Should the United States encourage or discourage Israel in its threat to strike? The Secretary of Defense, the DCI, the White House chief of staff, and Secretary of State Pollack

urged strong pressure on Israel to back off. “The threat of Israeli military action both harms us and harms our ability to get others to take courses of action that might indeed affect the Iranians,” Kay said. “Every time a European hears that the Israelis are planning an Osirak-type action, it makes it harder to get their cooperation.” Secretary of State Gerecht thought a successful attack was probably

beyond Israel’s technical capability, but that the United States should not publicly criticize or disagree with its best ally in the Middle East.

Sam Gardiner took the podium again. Now he was four-star General Gardiner, commander of CENTCOM. The President wanted to understand the options he actually had for a military approach to Iran. The general and his staff had prepared plans for three escalating levels of involvement: a punitive raid against key Revolutionary Guard units, to retaliate for Iranian actions elsewhere, most likely in Iraq; a pre-emptive air strike on possible nuclear facilities; and a “regime change” operation, involving the



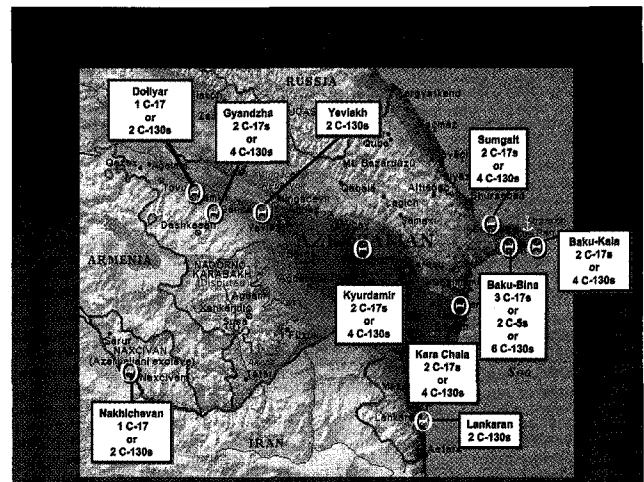
PowerPoint presentation: figure 5

forcible removal of the mullahs' government in Tehran. Either of the first two could be done on its own, but the third would require the first two as preparatory steps. In the real world the second option—a pre-emptive air strike against Iranian nuclear sites—is the one most often discussed. Gardiner said that in his briefing as war-game leader he would present versions of all three plans based as closely as possible on current military thinking. He would then ask the principals to recommend not that an attack be launched but that the President authorize the preparatory steps to make all three possible.

The first option was straightforward and, according to Gardiner, low-risk. The United States knew where the Revolutionary Guard units were, and it knew how to attack them. "We will use Stealth airplanes, U.S.-based B-2 bombers, and cruise missiles to attack," Gardiner said. "We could do this in one night." These strikes on military units would not in themselves do anything about Iran's nuclear program. Gardiner mentioned them because they would be a necessary first step in laying the groundwork for the ultimate scenario of forced regime change, and because they would offer the United States a "measured" retaliatory option if Iran were proved to be encouraging disorder in Iraq.

The pre-emptive air strike was the same one that had been deemed too demanding for the Israelis. The general's staff had identified 300 "aim points" in Iran. Some 125 of them were sites thought to be involved in producing nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons. The rest were part of Iran's air-defense or command system. "I call this a low-risk option also," Gardiner said, speaking for CENTCOM. "I'm not doing that as political risk—that's your job. I mean it's a low-risk military option." Gardiner said this plan would start with an attack on air-defense sites and would take five days in all.

Then there was option No. 3. Gardiner called this plan "moderate risk," but said the best judgment of the military was that it would succeed. To explain it he spent thirty minutes presenting the very sorts of slides most likely to impress civilians: those with sweeping arrows indicating the rapid



PowerPoint presentation: figure 6

movement of men across terrain. (When the exercise was over, I told David Kay that an observer who had not often seen such charts remarked on how "cool" they looked. "Yes, and the longer you've been around, the more you learn to be skeptical of the 'cool' factor in PowerPoint," Kay said. "I don't think the President had seen many charts like that before," he added, referring to President Bush as he reviewed war plans for Iraq.)

The overall plan of attack was this: a "deception" effort from the south, to distract Iranian troops; a main-force assault across the long border with Iraq; airborne and Special Forces attacks from Afghanistan and Azerbaijan; and cruise missiles from ships at sea. Gardiner presented more-detailed possibilities for the deployment. A relatively light assault, like the one on Afghanistan, is depicted in figure 4. A "heavier" assault would involve more troops and machines attacking across two main fronts (figure 5).

In all their variety, these and other regime-change plans he described had two factors in common. One is that they minimized "stability" efforts—everything that would happen after the capital fell. "We want to take out of this operation what has caused us problems in Iraq," Gardiner of CENTCOM said, referring to the postwar morass. "The idea is to give the President an option that he can execute that will involve about twenty days of buildup that will probably not be seen by the world. Thirty days of operation to regime change and taking down the nuclear system, and little or no stability operations. Our objective is to be on the outskirts of Tehran in about two weeks. The notion is we will not have a Battle of Tehran; we don't want to do that. We want to have a battle around the city. We want to bring our combat power to the vicinity of Tehran and use Special Operations to take the targets inside the capital. We have no intention of getting bogged down in stability operations in Iran afterwards. Go in quickly, change the regime, find a replacement, and get out quickly after having destroyed—rendered inoperative—the nuclear facilities." How could the military dare suggest such a plan, after the

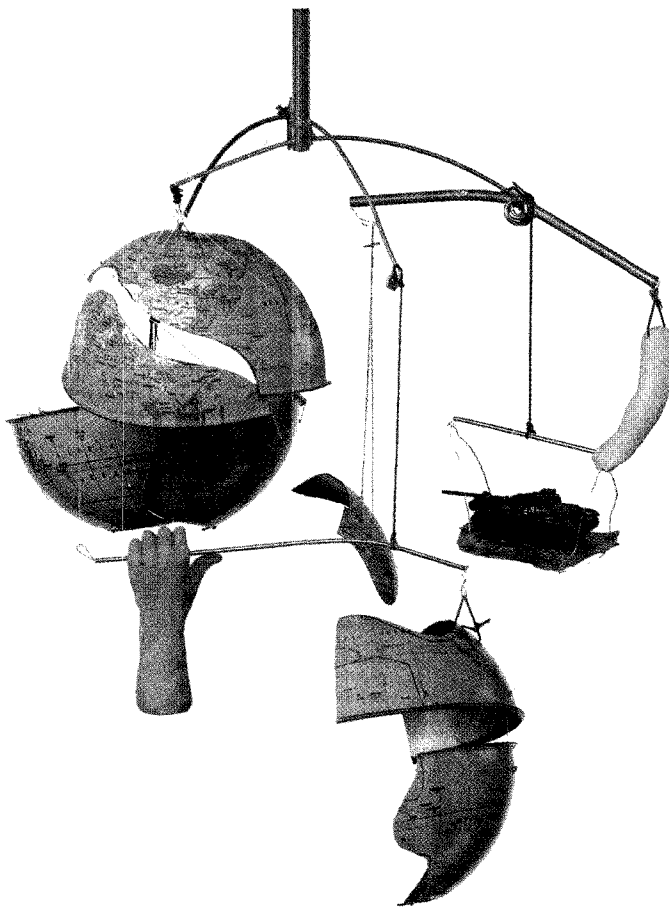
disastrous consequences of ignoring “stability” responsibilities in Iraq? Even now, Gardiner said after the war game, the military sees post-conflict operations as peripheral to its duties. If these jobs need to be done, someone else must take responsibility for them.

The other common factor was the need for troops, machinery, and weapons to be nearby and ready to move. Positioning troops would not be that big a problem. When one unit was replacing another in Iraq, for a while both units would be in place, and the attack could happen then. But getting enough machinery into place was more complicated, because airfields in nearby Georgia and Azerbaijan are too small to handle a large flow of military cargo planes (figure 6).

As CENTCOM commander, Gardiner cautioned that any of the measures against Iran would carry strategic risks. The two major dangers were that Iran would use its influence to inflame anti-American violence in Iraq, and that it would use its leverage to jack up oil prices, hurting America’s economy and the world’s. In this sense option No. 2—the pre-emptive air raid—would pose as much risk as the full assault, he said. In either case the Iranian regime would conclude that America was bent on its destruction, and it would have no reason to hold back on any tool of retaliation it could find. “The region is like a mobile,” he said. “Once an element is set in motion, it is impossible to say where the whole thing will come to rest.” But the President had asked for a full range of military options, and unless his closest advisers were willing to go to him empty-handed, they needed to approve the steps that would keep all the possibilities alive. That meant authorizing the Department of Defense to begin expanding airfields, mainly in Azerbaijan, and to dedicate \$700 million to that purpose. (As it happens, this is the same amount Tommy Franks requested in July of 2002, to keep open the possibility of war in Iraq.) “This is not about executing the plan,” Gardiner of CENTCOM said. “We’re preparing options for the President; the whole issue of execution is separate. We need some money to build facilities.”

Gardiner remained at the podium to answer questions as the CENTCOM commander, and the discussion began. The panelists skipped immediately to the regime-change option, and about it there was unanimity: the plan had been modeled carefully on the real assault on Iraq, and all five advisers were appalled by it.

“You need to take this back to Tampa,” David Kay said, to open the discussion. Tampa, of course, is the headquarters for CENTCOM units operating in Iraq and Afghanistan. “Or put it someplace else I’d suggest, but we’re in public.” What was remarkable about the briefing, he said, was all the charts that were not there. “What were the countermoves?” he asked. “The military countermoves—not the political ones you offloaded to my Secretaries of State but the obvious military countermoves that the Iranians have? A very



easy military counter is to raise the cost of your military operation inside Iraq. Are you prepared to do that?”

The deeper problem, Kay said, lay with the request for money to “keep options open.” “That, quite frankly, is a bunch of bullshit,” he said. “Approval of the further planning process forecloses a number of options immediately. I would love to see a strategic communications plan that would allow us to continue diplomatic and other options immediately with our European allies when this leaks; inevitably this will leak.”

The next twenty minutes of discussion was to the same effect. Who, exactly, would succeed the mullahs in command? How on earth would U.S. troops get out as quickly as they had come in? “Speaking as the President’s chief of staff, I think you are doing the President an enormous disservice,” Kenneth Bacon said. “One, it will leak. Two, it will be politically and diplomatically disastrous when it leaks ... I think your invasion plan is a dangerous plan even to have on the table in the position of being leaked ... I would throw it in Tampa Bay and hope the sharks would eat it.”

“This is a paranoid regime,” Kenneth Pollack said of Iran. “Even if the development of the Caucasus airfields ... even if it *weren’t* about them, they would assume it was about them. So that in and of itself will likely provoke a response. The Iranians are not inert targets! If they started to think we were moving in the direction of a military move against them, they would start fighting us right away.”

Michael Mazarr, as Secretary of Defense, said he did not want the authority that was on offer to his department. “Tell the President my personal judgment would be the only cir-

cumstances in which we could possibly consider launching any significant operation in Iran would be the most extreme provocation, the most imminent threat,” he said.

Even the hardest-liner, Reuel Gerecht, was critical. “I would agree that our problems with the Islamic republic will not be over until the regime is changed,” he said. If the United States could launch a genuine surprise attack—suddenly, from aircraft carriers, rather than after a months-long buildup of surrounding airfields—he would look at it favorably. But on practical grounds, he said, “I would vote against the regime-change options displayed here.”

Further unhappy back-and-forth ensued, with the CENTCOM commander defending the importance of keeping all options open, and the principals warning of trouble when news of the plan got out. When Gardiner called an end to this segment, there was little objection to the most modest of the military proposals—being ready, if need be, for a punitive strike on the Revolutionary Guards. The

Any of the measures against Iran would carry strategic risks. “The region is like a mobile,” Gardiner said. “Once an element is set in motion, it is impossible to say where the whole thing will come to rest.”

participants touched only briefly on the Osirak-style strike during the war game, but afterward most of them expressed doubt about its feasibility. The United States simply knew too little about which nuclear projects were under way and where they could be destroyed with confidence. If it launched an attack and removed some unknown proportion of the facilities, the United States might retard Iran’s progress by an unknown number of months or years—at the cost of inviting all-out Iranian retaliation. “Pre-emption is only a tactic that puts off the nuclear development,” Gardiner said after the exercise. “It cannot make it go away. Since our intelligence is so limited, we won’t even know what we achieved after an attack. If we set it back a year, what do we do a year later? A pre-emptive strike would carry low military risk but high strategic risk.”

During the war game the regime-change plan got five nays. But it was clear to all that several other big issues lay on the table, unresolved. How could the President effectively negotiate with the Iranians if his own advisers concluded that he had no good military option to use as a threat? How could the world’s most powerful and sophisticated military lack the ability to take an opponent by surprise? How could leaders of that military imagine, after Iraq, that they could ever again propose a “quick in-

and-out” battle plan? Why was it so hard to develop plans that allowed for the possibility that an adversary would be clever and ruthless? Why was it so hard for the United States to predict the actions and vulnerabilities of a regime it had opposed for twenty-five years?

At noon the war game ended. As a simulation it had produced recommendations that the President send a go-slow signal to the Israelis and that he not authorize any work on airfields in Central Asia. His advisers recommended that he not even be shown CENTCOM’s plans for invading Iran.

The three hours of this exercise were obviously not enough time for the panel of advisers to decide on all aspects of a new policy toward Iran. But the intended purpose of the exercise was to highlight the real options a real President might consider. What did it reveal? Gardiner called for a wrap-up from participants and observers immediately after the event. From their comments, plus interviews with the participants in the following week, three big themes emerged: the exercise demonstrated something about Iraq, something about the way governments make decisions, and something about Iran.

Iraq was a foreground topic throughout the game, since it was where a threatened Iran might most easily retaliate. It was even more powerful in its background role. Every aspect of discussion about Iran was colored by knowledge of how similar decisions had played out in Iraq. What the United States knew and didn’t know about secret weapons projects. What could go wrong with its military plans. How much difficulty it might face in even a medium-size country. “Compared with Iraq, Iran has three times the population, four times the land area, and five times the problems,” Kenneth Pollack said during the war game. A similar calculation could be heard in almost every discussion among the principals, including those who had strongly supported the war in Iraq. This was most obvious in the dismissal of the full-scale regime-change plan—which, Gardiner emphasized, was a reflection of real-life military thinking, not a straw man. “I have been working on these options for almost eighteen months,” he said later. “I tried them in class with my military students. They were the best I could do. I was looking for a concept that would limit our involvement in stability operations. We just don’t have the forces to do that in Iran. The two lesser concepts”—punitive raids on the Revolutionary Guard and pre-emptive air strikes—“were really quite good from a military perspective.” And of course the sweeping third concept, in the very similar form of Tommy Franks’s plan, had been approved by a real President without the cautionary example of Iraq to learn from.

Exactly what learning from Iraq will mean is important but impossible to say. “Iraq” could become shorthand for a comprehensive disaster—one of intention, execution, and effect. “Usually we don’t make the same mistakes immedi-

ately," Graham Allison said. "We make different mistakes." In an attempt to avoid "another Iraq," in Iran or elsewhere, a different Administration would no doubt make new mistakes. If George Bush is re-elected, the lessons of Iraq in his second term will depend crucially on who is there to heed them. All second-term Presidents have the same problem, "which is that the top guys are tired out and leave—or tired out and stay," Kay said. "You get the second-best and the second-brightest, it's really true." "There will be new people, and even the old ones will behave differently," Gardiner said. "The CIA will not make unequivocal statements. There will be more effort by everyone to question plans." But Kay said that the signal traits of the George W. Bush Administration—a small group of key decision-makers, no fundamental challenge of prevailing views—would most likely persist. "I have come to the conclusion that it is a function of the way the President thinks, operates, declares his policy ahead of time," Kay said. "It is inherent in the nature of George Bush, and therefore inherent in the system."

What went wrong in Iraq, according to our participants, can in almost all cases be traced back to the way the Administration made decisions. "Most people with detailed knowledge of Iraq, from the CIA to the State Department to the Brits, thought it was a crazy quilt held together in an artificial state," Allison said. Because no such people were involved in the decision to go to war, the Administration expected a much easier reception than it met—with ruinous consequences. There was no strong institutional system for reconciling differences between the Pentagon, the State Department, the CIA, and other institutions, and the person who theoretically might have done this, Condoleezza Rice, was weak. "If you don't have a deliberate process in which the National Security Adviser is playing a strong role, clarifying contrary views, and hammering out points of difference, you have the situation you did," Allison said. "There was no analytic memo that all the parties looked at that said, 'Here's how we see the shape of this problem; here is the logic that leads to targeting Iraq rather than North Korea.'"

"Process" sounds dull, and even worse is "government decision-making," but these topics provoked the most impassioned comments from panelists and observers when they were interviewed after the war game. All were alarmed about the way governments now make life-and-death decisions; this was, after Iraq, the second big message of the exercise.

"Companies deciding which kind of toothpaste to market have much more rigorous, established decision-making processes to refer to than the most senior officials of the U.S. government deciding whether or not to go to war," Michael Mazarr said. "On average, the national-security apparatus of the United States makes decisions far less rigorously than it ought to, and is capable of. The Bush Administration is more instinctual, more small-group-driven, less concerned about being sure they have covered every assumption, than

other recent Administrations, particularly that of George H. W. Bush. But the problem is bigger than one Administration or set of decision-makers."

Gardiner pointed out how rare it is for political leaders to ask, "And what comes after that? And then?" Thomas Hammes, the Marine expert in counterinsurgency, said that presentations by military planners feed this weakness in their civilian superiors, by assuming that the adversary will cooperate. "We never 'red-celled' the enemy in this exercise" (that is, let him have the first move), Hammes said after the Iran war game. "What if they try to pre-empt us? What if we threaten them, and the next day we find mines in Baltimore Harbor and the Golden Gate, with a warning that there will be more? Do we want to start this game?" Such a failure of imagination—which Hammes said is common in military-run war games—has a profound effect, because it leads to war plans like the ones from Gardiner's CENTCOM, or from Tommy Franks, which in turn lull Presidents into false confidence. "There is no such thing as a quick, clean war," he said. "War will always take you in directions different from what you intended. The only guy in recent history who started a war and got what he intended was Bismarck," who achieved the unification of Germany after several European wars.

Gardiner pointed out that none of the principals had even bothered to ask whether Congress would play a part in the decision to go to war. "This game was consistent with a pattern I have been seeing in games for the past ten years," he said. "It is not the fault of the military, but they have learned to move faster than democracy was meant to move."

And what did the exercise show about Iran? In the week after the war game I interviewed the participants about the views they had expressed "in role" and about their personal recommendations for the next President's approach. From these conversations, and from the participants' other writings and statements about Iran, the following themes emerged.

About Iran's intentions there is no disagreement. Iran is trying to develop nuclear weapons, and unless its policy is changed by the incentives it is offered or the warnings it receives, it will succeed.

About America's military options there is almost as clear a view. In circumstances of all-out war the United States could mount an invasion of Iran if it had to. If sufficiently provoked—by evidence that Iran was involved in a terrorist incident, for example, or that it was fomenting violence in Iraq—the United States could probably be effective with a punitive bomb-and-missile attack on Revolutionary Guard units.

But for the purposes most likely to interest the next American President—that is, as a tool to slow or stop Iran's progress toward nuclear weaponry—the available military options are likely to fail in the long term. A full-scale "regime change" operation has both obvious and hidden

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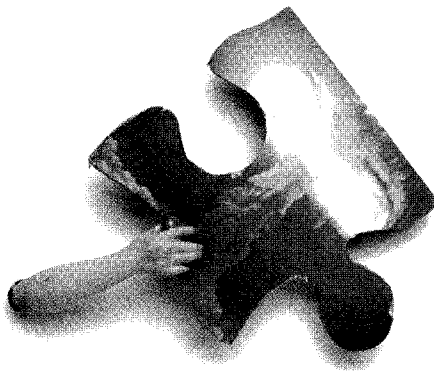
risks. The obvious ones are that the United States lacks enough manpower and equipment to take on Iran while still tied down in Iraq, and that domestic and international objections would be enormous. The most important hidden problem, exposed in the war-game discussions, was that a full assault would require such drawn-out preparations that the Iranian government would know months in advance what was coming. Its leaders would have every incentive to strike pre-emptively in their own defense. Unlike Saddam Hussein's Iraq, a threatened Iran would have many ways to harm America and its interests. Apart from cross-border disruptions in Iraq, it might form an outright alliance with al-Qaeda to support major new attacks within the United States. It could work with other oil producers to punish America economically. It could, as Hammes warned, apply the logic of "asymmetric," or "fourth-generation," warfare, in which a superficially weak adversary avoids a direct chal-

of course, that Iran not reach a new level of power with a vendetta against America. One of our panelists thought that a strike would help the United States, simply by buying time. The rest disagreed. Iran would rebuild after a strike, and from that point on it would be much more reluctant to be talked or bargained out of pursuing its goals—and it would have far more reason, once armed, to use nuclear weapons to America's detriment.

Most of our panelists felt that the case against a U.S. strike was all the more powerful against an Israeli strike. With its much smaller air force and much more limited freedom to use airspace, Israel would probably do even less "helpful" damage to Iranian sites. The hostile reaction—against both Israel and the United States—would be potentially more lethal to both Israel and its strongest backer.

A realistic awareness of these constraints will put the next President in an awkward position. In the end, accord-

ing to our panelists, he should understand that he cannot prudently order an attack on Iran. But his chances of negotiating his way out of the situation will be greater if the Iranians don't know that. He will have to brandish the threat of a possible attack while offering the incentive of economic and diplomatic favors should Iran abandon



For the purposes most likely to interest the next President—that is, as a tool to slow or stop Iran's progress toward nuclear weaponry—the available military options are all likely to fail.

lenge to U.S. military power and instead strikes the most vulnerable points in American civilian society, as al-Qaeda did on 9/11. If it thought that the U.S. goal was to install a wholly new regime rather than to change the current regime's behavior, it would have no incentive for restraint.

What about a pre-emptive strike of our own, like the Osirak raid? The problem is that Iran's nuclear program is now much more advanced than Iraq's was at the time of the raid. Already the U.S. government has no way of knowing exactly how many sites Iran has, or how many it would be able to destroy, or how much time it would buy in doing so. Worse, it would have no way of predicting the long-term strategic impact of such a strike. A strike might delay by three years Iran's attainment of its goal—but at the cost of further embittering the regime and its people. Iran's intentions when it did get the bomb would be all the more hostile.

Here the United States faces what the military refers to as a "branches and sequels" decision—that is, an assessment of best and second-best outcomes. It would prefer that Iran never obtain nuclear weapons. But if Iran does, America would like Iran to see itself more or less as India does—as a regional power whose nuclear status symbolizes its strength relative to regional rivals, but whose very attainment of this position makes it more committed to defending the status quo. The United States would prefer,

its plans. "If you say there is no acceptable military option, then you end any possibility that there will be a non-nuclear Iran," David Kay said after the war game. "If the Iranians believe they will not suffer any harm, they will go right ahead." Hammes agreed: "The threat is always an important part of the negotiating process. But you want to fool the enemy, not fool yourself. You can't delude yourself into thinking you can do something you can't." Is it therefore irresponsible to say in public, as our participants did and we do here, that the United States has no military solution to the Iran problem? Hammes said no. Iran could not be sure that an American President, seeing what he considered to be clear provocation, would not strike. "You can never assume that just because a government knows something is unviable, it won't go ahead and do it. The Iraqis knew it was not viable to invade Iran, but they still did it. History shows that countries make very serious mistakes."

So this is how the war game turned out: with a finding that the next American President must, through bluff and patience, change the actions of a government whose motives he does not understand well, and over which his influence is limited. "After all this effort, I am left with two simple sentences for policymakers," Sam Gardiner said of his exercise. "You have no military solution for the issues of Iran. And you have to make diplomacy work." ▀

NOBEL PRIZE CLAIM FORM

BY BRUCE MCCALL

.....

1. I deserve a Nobel Prize in: Lit___ Math___ Physics___ Medicine___ Peace___ Other___

2. BASIS OF MY CLAIM

Before you begin: Applicants must be smart enough to know that writing in Swedish and/or familiarity with the history of dynamite will not necessarily increase their chances for a favorable ruling.

Put a check next to the claim basis that most closely resembles yours.

- A. Deserving winner, but anti-me fix was in.
- B. Temp secretary sent nomination form to Pulitzer Committee.
- C. Forgot to include return postage on nomination form.
- D. Not told 12-midnight nomination deadline was Swedish Standard Time.
- E. Other.*

*"Other" may not include: King of Sweden holds grudge against me/Tux rental store out of my size/
Won prize but left it in taxi outside Club Ecstasy afterward, and driver took off after waiting 8 hours.

3. MY MERIT VERIFICATION

The following statement as to why you deserve your Nobel Prize must be written by someone other than yourself who is NOT your pastor/high school principal/parent/parole officer/warden.

He/She deserves his/her Nobel because: _____

Reminder: "He/She even knows who the Democratic vice-presidential candidate was in 1952" is not sufficient grounds for being awarded a Nobel Prize.

4. BRAIN TWISTERS

Nobel Aptitude Requirements: To eliminate impostors, you MUST answer at least 1 of these 3 questions:

- A. Without using pencil and paper, calculate the circumference of Kirstie Alley.
- B. The desert island that a rabbi, a Scotsman, and a nymphomaniac are stranded on lies ___ leagues (rounded to the nearest team) from the Galápagos Islands.
- C. In what novel besides *The Mill on the Floss* does the phrase "Call me Ishmael" not appear?

ANSWERS: A. WRONG B. WRONG C. WRONG. A legitimate Nobel Prize candidate would have recognized these as trick questions and countered with 3 authentic Brain Twisters. New Rule: Imposters must return this claim form, torn in half, with a check or money order in the amount of \$1.

5. DO I THINK LIKE A NOBEL LAUREATE?

Imagine yourself in the following situations and describe what you would do if:

- A. The Queen of Sweden "came on" to me as I sat waiting to make my acceptance speech.
- B. Greenpeace picketed the awards ceremony, condemning me as a guppy-murderer.
- C. Visa declined my card when I tried buying the Awards Committee a round of drinks.

This has been a test of your sangfroid. These situations and the proper responses are listed in "So You've Won a Nobel," the pamphlet included with the welcoming fruit basket in your Stockholm hotel room. (Do NOT accept pamphlets tendered by masked gypsies riding in the same hotel elevator.)

6. WELL, DO I GET MY NOBEL PRIZE?

Be advised that of the 432 applications accepted from the more than one million claimants just like you who applied for a Nobel Prize in 2003, 4 were approved:

Recipient	Claim
Name Withheld, Ottawa, Canada	Ex-spouse melted down my original Nobel Prize.
"Madame X," Paris, France	Was promised Nobel Prize by a relative of a Scandinavian crowned head.
H. K., Toms River, NJ, U.S.A.	Proud grandparent of high school honor student.
King Fleagle, Los Angeles, CA, U.S.A.	Had perfect poker hand.*

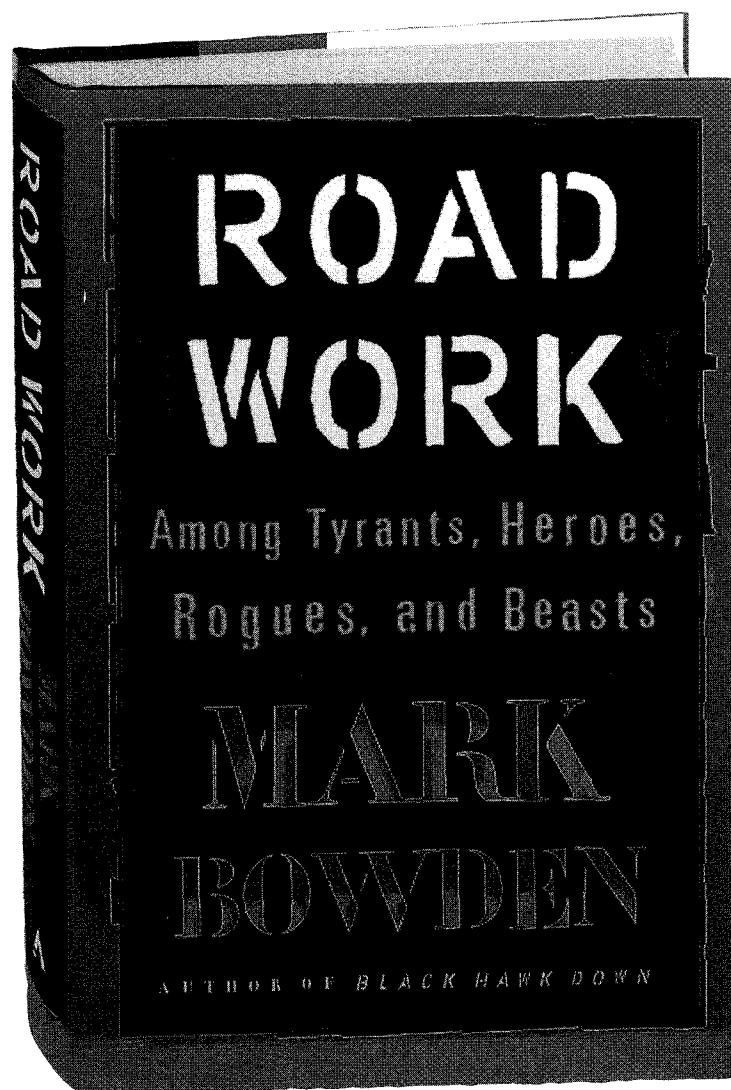
*Nobel Prize later withdrawn on finding that there is no Nobel Prize for poker.

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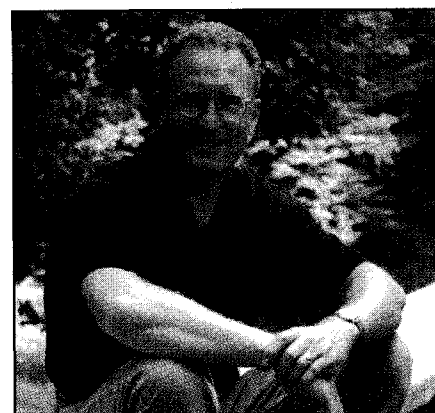
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THE CONFIDENTIALITY FETISH

The problem with attorney-client privilege

BY WILLIAM H. SIMON

.....

Last year the former Oklahoma governor Frank Keating resigned as head of a commission appointed to look into the sexual-abuse crisis in the Catholic Church, because some bishops were refusing to provide information the commission requested. Why would the Church, having appointed such a panel, deny it access to relevant information? Because, Keating explained, the uncooperative bishops had “turned to their lawyers when they should have looked into their hearts.” Although most Catholics favor “transparency” in this crisis, another commission member explained, “the attorneys for a diocese do not think that way.”

This is an all too familiar refrain in American public life. The captain of the Staten Island ferry that crashed into a pier in October of last year, killing ten people, wouldn't tell investigators where he had been at the time of the crash—his lawyer wouldn't let him. At about the same time, in Palo Alto, California, a teenage girl involved in a bizarre hit-and-run accident that killed a small child received a surprisingly harsh sentence. The victim's family had urged severity after repeatedly expressing bitterness at the girl's failure to apologize to them. Her lawyers had advised her not to. After he was forced to admit his involvement with Monica Lewinsky, Bill Clinton earned further opprobrium by refusing—most likely on the recommendation of his lawyers—to concede that he had earlier lied about Monica during the Paula Jones case.

Even people with little reason to fear liability turn to lawyers to vet their public statements. Anita Hill, herself a lawyer, appeared at Clarence Thomas's confirmation hearings with a battery of lawyers—even though her role was simply to give a straightforward account of events she had witnessed, with no prospect of ensuing litigation. Sherron Watkins, the Enron accountant who confronted Kenneth Lay face-to-face at a time when many of her peers were afraid to do so, often spoke to the media through a lawyer after she became famous.

Lawyers, in short, have carved out a role for themselves as the privileged keepers of much information that is important to the public interest. Historically, lawyers have liked to think of themselves as defenders of individual liberty against an overbearing state, primarily through traditional

advocacy—that is, persuasively asserting a client's rights. Today, however, lawyers' typical efforts to mediate between clients and the state rely less on advocacy and more on information control. This is a disturbing development; lawyers have brought to their new role as information guardians a powerful predisposition toward needless secrecy that suppresses and distorts information about many matters of public importance.

Never say anything to the police without talking to a lawyer first. Never volunteer anything in a deposition. Never try to explain or apologize when you are in an accident. Don't talk to anyone about your civil case. These canonical precepts serve to maximize the profession's influence. Lawyers are excessively prone to advise confidentiality for the same reason that surgeons are excessively prone to advise surgery. Confidentiality puts a premium on services and protections that lawyers are distinctively qualified to provide.

Dependence on lawyers often impedes responsible or humane behavior. It also has tangible costs for some clients. The Palo Alto teenager would probably have been better off if she had been more candid about her wrongdoing. So, for that matter, would Bill Clinton. Candor might have created more sympathy for the teenager at her sentencing hearing, and it might have eased the political pressure on the President.

In a world that increasingly seeks transparency in government and business, the legal profession stands out for its frankly uncompromising commitment to opacity. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis's principle that “sunlight” is the “best of disinfectants” is a major influence on contemporary public policy nearly everywhere except in his own profession.

The bar's commitment to confidentiality is not just an ideology; it is also a marketing strategy. In the bar's competition with other professions, confidentiality is often a more important advantage than legal expertise. Many accountants can give better advice than most lawyers about what belongs on a tax return; and one needs an engineer to draft some reports that are required by environmental laws. But lawyers can give clients something

William H. Simon is the Arthur Levitt Professor of Law at Columbia University and the author of The Practice of Justice: A Theory of Lawyers' Ethics (1998).

that other professionals, with the exception of doctors and priests, cannot: strong confidentiality rights. Although the legal system routinely requires accountants, bankers, and business consultants to disclose ostensibly private communications with their clients, attorney-client privilege protects most communication between lawyers and their clients from involuntary revelation.

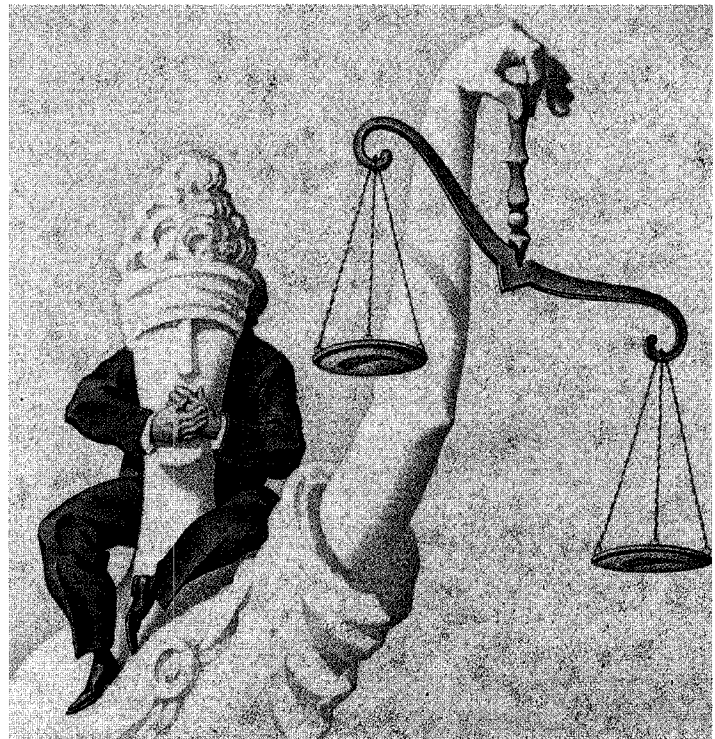
This principle got a boost from the Supreme Court's 1981 decision in *Upjohn v. United States*. *Upjohn* involved an investigation by a lawyer at the pharmaceutical company of an allegation that middle managers had bribed foreign government officials. When the Internal Revenue Service subpoenaed the lawyer's files, the Court ruled that they were privileged. In the years since *Upjohn* was decided, corporate investigations have become a big business, and lawyers have acquired a virtual monopoly over it.

Tobacco-company lawyers further tested the limits of confidentiality when they persuaded their clients to give them responsibility for much of the companies' research on the health effects of smoking. The lawyers reasoned that since health effects were central to many product-liability suits against the companies, the research facilitated legal advice, and hence should be privileged. If the results looked good, the studies were shifted away from the lawyers and made public. If they looked bad, the lawyers invoked privilege. Some courts rejected this strategy as an abuse of privilege, but it is hard to distinguish from the more routine practice, encouraged by *Upjohn*, of using lawyers to investigate allegations of wrongdoing.

A recent move to tighten financial-disclosure requirements for public companies—the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, passed by Congress in reaction to the Enron scandal and other corporate infractions—has increased the demand for lawyers even more. Although the reporting that Sarbanes-Oxley calls for is financial, lawyers, rather than accountants, determine what is to be disclosed. Anxious about the expanded liability the statute imposes, executives would rather talk to lawyers than to accountants or consultants, because lawyers confer greater confidentiality. When board meetings address sensitive issues these days, the directors frequently ask nonlegal advisers to leave the room.

The bar is currently fighting a proposal by the Securities and Exchange Commission that would require a corporation to report to the commission if one of its lawyers withdraws because the corporation persists in conduct the lawyer has advised is illegal. The bar argues that such a “noisy withdrawal,” by signaling the lawyer's knowledge of wrongdoing, would effectively disclose the communications that prompted it. Noisy withdrawal is a long-standing requirement for accountants. But lawyers have so far been successful in blocking its application to themselves.

Of course, most business and professional relations involve confidentiality. In most dealings, however, the law requires that confidentiality yield to stronger public or third-party interests. Yet the bar often insists that attorney-client confidentiality be preserved at the expense of even the weightiest competing interests. Suppose—to take a case studied in law-school ethics classes—that a now deceased client once confessed to his lawyer that he had committed a crime of which someone else has just been convicted. May the lawyer disclose the confession in order to save the wrongfully convicted person? The stakes for the convicted person are enormous; the stakes for the deceased client are nil. Nevertheless, the Arizona Supreme Court once held in a similar case that disclosure is



prohibited. The American Bar Association recently revised its position on confidentiality to permit disclosure in situations like this; but most jurisdictions still follow the rule applied in the Arizona case.

For the bar, the rationale for confidentiality is that without it, people would avoid lawyers or withhold information from them. By itself, of course, such a consequence would not hurt anyone but lawyers. Whether there is a public interest in encouraging consultation with lawyers depends on a further contention: that it tends to induce compliance with the law. Assured of confidentiality, the argument goes, clients will freely disclose their plans to their lawyers, who can then counsel them not to pursue plans that would violate the law. Without the assurance of confidentiality, many of these discussions would never take place, and lawyers would lose the opportunity to direct their clients along the straight and narrow.

PHIL HULING

It seems unlikely, however, that the kind of advice clients seek only when assured of confidentiality has socially desirable effects. One problem with the claim that legal advice promotes compliance with the law is ambiguity in the meaning of “compliance.” Some legal advice is designed to help clients get around a law by casting their affairs in a way that technically conforms to it but defeats its purposes. Many lawyers insist that they have a duty to exploit loopholes in the interests of their clients whenever possible. Vinson & Elkins, a firm that helped Enron craft bizarre business structures for the sole purpose of giving an unrealistically favorable appearance to the company’s financial statements, has responded to criticism by saying that as long as what the client wanted could be accomplished within the law, the law firm was not responsible for any bad consequences. Society may be obliged to permit lawful though obnoxious conduct (although many people dispute that this was even lawful), but it is not obliged to encourage it with the shield of confidentiality. If limiting confidentiality reduces Enron-style “compliance,” so much the better.

Let’s assume, however, that “compliance” means respecting both the letter and the spirit of the law. Is strong confi-

The bar’s commitment to confidentiality is not just an ideology—it is also a marketing strategy.

dentiality likely to further it? Someone who feels committed to obeying the law in any case should not need an assurance of confidentiality to disclose his plans. The bar’s argument assumes that the client has some disposition to disobey it. So what does a lawyer say to induce him to comply? The lawyer can advise the client about the likelihood that wrongful behavior will be prosecuted, and explain what the penalty for getting caught might be—but there is no guarantee that this information will encourage compliance. In certain areas of practice both the likelihood of prosecution and the size of the penalties are so small relative to the prospective gains from wrongful behavior that full knowledge of the law often makes a client more inclined to violate it. For instance, low audit rates and low penalties for a number of abuses make tax evasion a rational strategy for many clients. (The Internal Revenue Service recently went to court to force several law firms, including the Dallas firm of Jenkins & Gilchrist, to disclose their tax-shelter client lists, quite understandably suspecting that the firms’ legal advice increased the propensity of their clients to engage in practices the IRS considers illegal.)

Cutting back confidentiality might leave lawyers with fewer opportunities for encouraging their clients to comply, but they would have more success with the opportunities

they did get. If lawyers had to disclose illegal behavior through noisy withdrawal, as the SEC proposes, they would have much more leverage with those clients who did consult them.

The net effect of confidentiality, therefore, is probably to *reduce* compliance with the law. This truth is implicit in laws such as those requiring therapists to report possible child abuse by their clients. Knowledge of this requirement may prevent some potential abusers from seeking professional help in time—but policymakers have consistently assumed that disclosure laws prevent and stop abuse much more often. Indeed, the bar’s own confidentiality rules allow disclosures that would prevent criminal acts likely to cause “death or substantial bodily injury.” If confidentiality really promoted compliance, then the rules protecting it would be strengthened, not relaxed, when the stakes were high.

The rationale for strong confidentiality evaporates completely in those areas of corporate practice covered by regulations like the SEC’s noisy-withdrawal proposal. For one thing, corporate executives do not have the luxury of withholding information from lawyers, because doing so would deprive them of the right to invoke the “advice of counsel” defense in a criminal case or the “business judgment” defense in a civil case. Moreover, under even the strictest confidentiality rules a corporate manager cannot assume that everything he tells his company’s lawyer will remain private—because the “client” in the corporate context is the organization, not the managers who work for it. Corporations can waive confidentiality for their managers’ statements, and after wrongdoing is discovered they often do. What frequently happens is that the managers are fired, and the board waives confidentiality for their statements to counsel in the hope of inducing prosecutors to be lenient toward the corporation.

In 1995 Bernard Nussbaum had a suggestive exchange with Senator Richard Shelby in the course of a Senate Whitewater Committee investigation into the circumstances that forced Nussbaum to resign as White House counsel. One of the episodes that led to his resignation was his refusal to allow the Justice Department to search the office of Vincent Foster, the deputy White House counsel, after Foster was found shot to death in a nearby Virginia park. Asserting a lawyer’s prerogative to control information, Nussbaum insisted that he review all the documents in Foster’s office first, in order to decide whether any of them should be kept confidential. The Justice lawyers were looking for evidence pertinent to Foster’s death, and, in fact, a suicide note was eventually discovered in his office.

Months later, when Nussbaum appeared before the committee, he professed bewilderment at the fuss his obstruction had provoked. Virtually any lawyer would have done as he did, he said, with unfortunate plausibility. But when he proceeded to argue that any *client* would want such behavior, he got into trouble with Senator Shelby.

SHELBY: Why didn't you say [to Deputy Attorney General Philip] Heymann, come on down and we'll look this over together?

NUSSBAUM: Senator, did you trust the Justice Department?

SHELBY: On stuff like that, I certainly do.

NUSSBAUM: Would you let them into your office, your counsel's office, to look at your personal stuff?

SHELBY: Absolutely. I have nothing to hide. They can come over tomorrow or today.

Lawyers are prone to forget that confidentiality often comes at a price—the implication that the person involved has something to hide. It now seems clear that Foster committed suicide; but there was much confusion at the time, and Nussbaum's assertion of confidentiality fueled suspicion of a cover-up.

Another indication that lawyers underestimate the costs of confidentiality—for both clients and society—comes from a recent experiment at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Lexington, Kentucky. After suffering large losses in two malpractice cases, the hospital responded in a daringly novel manner. Instead of trying to tighten control over information relevant to potential claims, it adopted a policy of routine voluntary disclosure. When a mistake was discovered, the hospital informed the patient or the family, apologized, and recommended consulting a lawyer. It made information available to the patient immediately without request, and when a malpractice claim was made, it responded promptly with what it considered a reasonable offer.

The hospital's premise was that malpractice claims are fueled less by financial motives than by anger and distrust. Disclosure and apology go a long way toward assuaging such feelings. (Jennifer Robbennolt, a psychologist at the University of Missouri, has found support for this idea in experimental simulations. Subjects asked to decide whether to accept specific settlement offers in hypothetical cases were most likely to accept when the defendant was described as open and apologetic.) And a claim can be resolved at lower cost when the defendant makes a convincing demonstration of good faith.

Of course, openness has a price too. Many patients who would never have discovered mistakes are told of them. Thus it's not surprising that the Lexington hospital sees a higher rate of claims than most VA hospitals. But its average payment per claim, and the total cost of claims made against it, are among the lowest recorded by any VA hospital. "The attorneys around here in Lexington used to think we were crazy," Ginny Hamm, then the hospital's lawyer, told a reporter for *The Philadelphia Inquirer* in 1999. But the hospital considers its program a resounding success, and many other institutions are reconsidering their practices as a result.

There are limits on how far such private initiatives can prudently go. Optimal transparency would probably require much deeper changes, including making our courts more efficient and scaling back our harsh and intrusive liability system. Still, as the Lexington hospital's experience suggests, the system leaves more room for transparency than lawyers typically realize—or tell their clients. ▀

LEAKS AND THE LAW

What happens when the journalistic principle of protecting confidential sources clashes with the public interest in prosecuting a crime? A cross-examination

BY BENJAMIN WITTES

.....

Who is Patrick J. Fitzgerald, and why is the press so upset with him?

Patrick J. Fitzgerald is the United States attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, based in Chicago. He was widely regarded as an excellent prosecutor and a fine man. Late last year, however, Deputy Attorney General James B. Comey Jr. asked Fitzgerald to take on the role of special counsel in investigating the leak to the columnist Robert Novak of Valerie Plame's status as an undercover CIA operative. Plame, you'll recall, is the wife of the former ambassador Joseph Wilson IV, who riled the Bush Administration by publicly taking issue, after investigating the matter for

the CIA, with the President's claims about Iraqi attempts to buy uranium in Niger. Knowingly leaking an operative's identity can be a crime, and Fitzgerald has taken his investigation seriously—far too seriously, from the press's point of view. In the course of trying to solve the whodunit, Fitzgerald has committed the biggest no-no in any prosecutor's relationship with the media: he has subpoenaed reporters to testify before a grand jury about their sources.

As of this writing Fitzgerald has obtained testimony from Tim Russert, of NBC; Matthew Cooper, of *Time*; and Glenn Kessler and Walter Pincus, of *The Washington Post*, about their conversations with Vice President Dick Cheney's

chief of staff, I. Lewis Libby—who has waived confidentiality and who, all reportedly said, did not disclose Plame's identity. In addition, Pincus, after resisting the subpoena, testified concerning his conversation with a still unidentified source, after that source talked to prosecutors about the conversation and informed Pincus through counsel that he had no problem with Pincus's doing so as well. Fitzgerald is currently after Judith Miller, of *The New York Times*—who investigated the matter but never actually wrote about it—and has issued a second subpoena to Cooper. Novak has not said whether he has received a subpoena.

Now William Safire has called Fitzgerald a “runaway prosecutor” who is “after the press with a vengeance and a blunderbuss.” *The New York Times* headlined its editorial about the Plame investigation “A LEAK PROBE GONE AWRY.” *The Wall Street Journal*, upset about the whole business from the beginning, complained back in July that “the entire leak probe now looks like a familiar Beltway case of criminalizing political differences,” and urged Fitzgerald to “fold up his tent.”

But how can Fitzgerald subpoena reporters? Isn't there some kind of privilege that protects the press?

The short answer is yes and no. The press always argues that the reporter-source relationship is entitled to protection in the courts, and reporters generally refuse to give up their sources in investigations. But in the 1972 case of *Branzburg v. Hayes*, the Supreme Court rejected the notion that the First Amendment's guarantee of a free press necessarily implies a reporter's privilege to keep confidential sources anonymous before a grand jury. That would seem to be the end of the matter—except that because of the way the sharply divided Court ruled, with four justices dissenting and one, Lewis Powell, writing an anguished concurrence, the press has had some room to argue that *Branzburg* was a kind of victory in defeat's clothing. This argument has gained traction in the lower courts, which have often found a measure of protection for the press in civil proceedings and criminal trials—holding that reporters should not have to testify unless the information is crucial and unavailable elsewhere. Moreover, many states have passed what are called shield laws, which effectively make the reporter's privilege a matter of statute.

Congress, however, has never passed a federal shield law, and the privilege is at its weakest in a grand-jury setting—because that is precisely the setting in which the Court rejected it in *Branzburg*. Consequently, Chief Judge Thomas Hogan, of the district court in Washington, who is overseeing the grand jury in the Plame probe, has rejected motions by reporters to quash the subpoenas; he briefly held Cooper in contempt last summer when the *Time* reporter defied the order to testify, and in October held in contempt both Cooper and Judith Miller, who are appealing the ruling. Technically, reporters are quite vulnerable to federal prosecutors if those prosecutors really want their testimony.

So why don't prosecutors do this more often?

Confrontations of this type are surprisingly rare, given the number of leaks—particularly leaks of grand-jury material. To a great extent this reflects the deference the Justice Department voluntarily shows to the role of the press in a democratic society. Anonymous sources, whether or not protecting them is privileged, are a key part of the news-gathering process. So department regulations frown on press subpoenas that are not absolutely necessary.

Moreover, the press's institutional defenses against subpoenas are stronger than one would imagine from reading *Branzburg*. A prosecutor who contemplates hauling a reporter in front of a grand jury knows he's going to have to litigate. He also knows that even if he wins, the reporter will most likely go to jail rather than give up a source; and even if a judge is willing to hold a reporter in contempt, it is rare for a court to use its coercive powers in anything more than token form. Even if a prosecutor wins the fight, he probably won't get the information he wants.

Consequently, to a certain extent the privilege exists beyond its legal reality, for the simple reason that very few judges view a reporter who is protecting a source as they would a recalcitrant witness like, say, Susan McDougal—who was jailed for many months for refusing to answer a grand jury's questions about Bill Clinton's Arkansas business dealings. Even when the law makes no distinction between a Miller and a McDougal, the reporter's silence is generally understood to be honorable.

Aren't the members of the press just being a bunch of hypocrites, who delightedly expose everyone else's secrets but whine when their own are on the line?

The core of the press's concern is very serious. Citizens expect reporters to dig up and serve them information they can't get by themselves. Crucial stories that have helped define the public's relationship with government simply would not have been possible without confidential sourcing; Watergate is only the most famous example. A journalist who does not try to solicit nonpublic information is just not committed to informing the public. Contributing knowledge to the public domain requires that journalists promise some of their sources confidentiality. Consequently, the public interest in respecting those promises is very strong. Other such interests are shielded by law: attorney-client discussions, the silence of the confessional, confidential communications within marriage, and patients' disclosures to their therapists all enjoy some protection against compelled testimony.

Still, there is a certain amount of hypocrisy in the vociferous denunciations of Fitzgerald. In none of these other protected relationships is the party who claims the right to withhold testimony directly involved in the transgression being investigated. A priest, for example, may hear a confession of criminal behavior, but the confession itself is not the alleged crime under investigation. The oddity of the

reporter's privilege is that reporters themselves are sometimes party to the improper—and occasionally illegal—disclosures that they then ask to be protected from testifying about. Leaks are the press's lifeblood. Many reporters are temperamentally incapable of seeing the damage they sometimes cause to privacy rights or security interests. A good leak always serves the reporter's interest. Too often, however, the press appears incapable of distinguishing between what is good for the press and what is good for the public. The press has a major conflict of interest in commenting on leak probes—a conflict about which media organizations are not always honest in their pious protestations that a given subpoena threatens the First Amendment.

Do you have a conflict of interest in writing this article?

Let me count the ways.

Two of my colleagues at *The Washington Post* have been in Fitzgerald's sights. One of them, Walter Pincus, I know well and consider a friend. In addition, I personally have conversations all the time with people whom I assure of my discretion. Such conversations inform, directly or indirectly, just about everything I write—including this piece.

And you'd go into contempt to protect those sources?

Of course.

LOYAL CARP

I myself a bottom feeder, I knew what
a chanson à la carp was—I a lover
of carp music—for I heard carp singing
behind the glass on the Delaware River,
keeping the shad themselves company
and always it was a basso, in that range there
was space for a song compleat, it was profundo
enough and just to stop and drink in that
melody and just to hum behind those
whiskers, that was muck enough for one life.

—GERALD STERN

Gerald Stern's latest collection of poems is American Sonnets. He received a National Book Award for This Time: New and Selected Poems.

And the law ought to relieve you of that burden?

I am personally comfortable with the risk that any leak probe might carry for me—not because of any great courage on my part but because I seldom publish information that's likely to trigger an investigation. Still, current law—under which it is hard to predict whether the lower courts will recognize the privilege—does seem both dishonest and unstable. Whatever he may argue in court, even Fitzgerald acknowledges that the reporters he is forcing to testify are different from his other witnesses. He has negotiated compromise arrangements with some of them that would be unimaginable with nonjournalistic witnesses: for example, the journalists have not actually appeared before the grand jury but have given depositions instead. And Pincus didn't name his source even when he answered limited questions about his conversation with that person, an account of which had already been published. It would be far healthier if the law uniformly reflected the reality that reporters are different. Under federal rules the courts can recognize new privileges in light of "reason and experience." Having the courts recognize a qualified privilege that balances the public interest in a story against the prosecutor's needs in the case at hand seems a sensible way to even things out. Dissenting in *Branzburg*, Justice Potter Stewart wrote that the privilege he would recognize could be overridden if prosecutors showed that their "inquiry [is] of 'compelling and overriding importance'" and "'convincingly' demonstrate[d] that the investigation is 'substantially related' to the information sought." He wrote, "They must demonstrate that it is reasonable to think the witness in question has that information. And they must show that there is not any means of obtaining the information less destructive of First Amendment liberties."

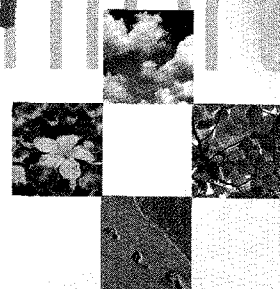
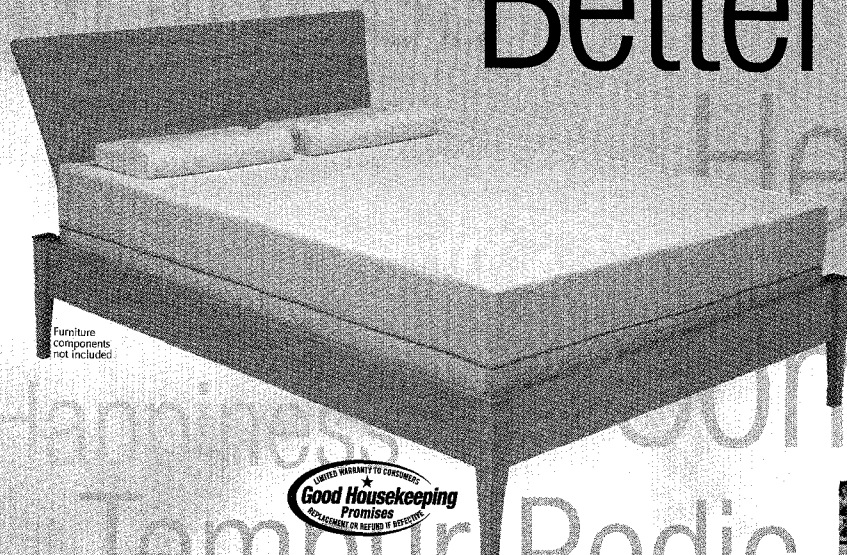
Delineating the reporter's privilege is no easy task. Should it apply to every blogger or freelance writer in whose ear the target of a criminal investigation whispers an interesting tidbit? When, exactly, should a reporter be protected, and when exposed? Moreover, it's not clear that even a qualified privilege would have stopped Fitzgerald. Judge Hogan has specifically said that even assuming such a privilege exists, Fitzgerald's testimony about his investigation and its needs has "established that Special Counsel would be able to meet even the most stringent of balancing tests."

But having a clearly recognized privilege would offer some protection to reporters, who shouldn't have to risk jail in order to do what everyone recognizes is their job. It would also offer some protection to Fitzgerald and other prosecutors, who might—if the law more closely reflected social expectations—be allowed to do their job without becoming pariahs. ▀

Benjamin Wittes is an editorial writer specializing in legal affairs for The Washington Post, and the author of Starr: A Reassessment. The views expressed here are his own.

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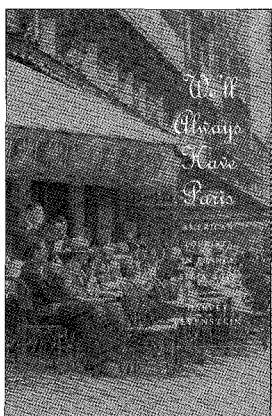
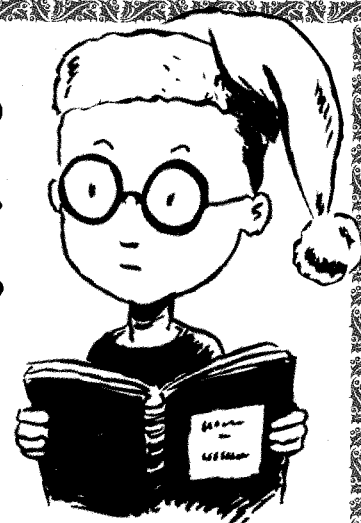
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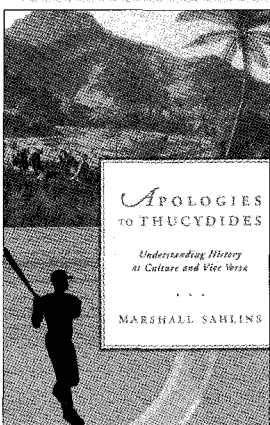
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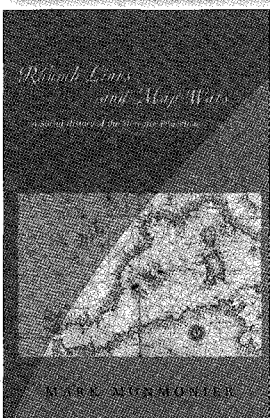
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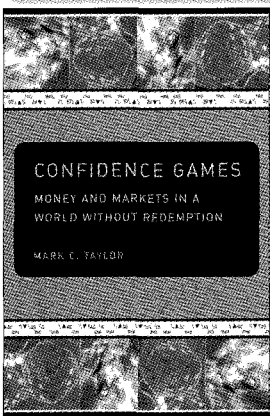
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BOOKS & CRITICS

DECEMBER 2004 | THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY

REVIEWED THIS MONTH:

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

edited by H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison

Encyclopedia of the Great Plains

edited by David J. Wishart

The Children's Blizzard

by David Laskin

The Encyclopedia of Chicago

edited by James R. Grossman, Ann Durkin Keating, and Janice L. Reiff

Chicago

by A. J. Liebling

Honored Guest

by Joy Williams

reviewed by Benjamin Schwarz

PAGES 121-124

Runaway

by Alice Munro

reviewed by Lorrie Moore

PAGE 125

Will in the World

by Stephen Greenblatt

reviewed by Cristina Nehring

PAGE 129

Gilead

by Marilynne Robinson

reviewed by Mona Simpson

PAGE 135

The Lesser Evil: The Diaries of Victor Klemperer 1945-1959

reviewed by Christopher Hitchens

PAGE 140

READING LIST:

The Wonderful, Horrible Life of Humankind

by David O. Russell

PAGE 137

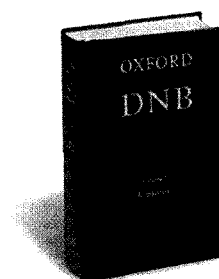
EDITOR'S CHOICE

Cheap at \$13,000

What to read this month

BY BENJAMIN SCHWARZ

Three great university presses have each issued a long-awaited and immense reference work. The sixty-volume (!) *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* is the most important of these. In fact it will surely be one of the great publishing achievements of this century. The original *DNB*, the first volume of which was published in 1884, was a monument to the scope, depth, and wit of late-Victorian learning, and (often) to English prose style. Its first editor, Leslie Stephen (the very model of the English man of letters, a self-described "considerate autocrat," and the father of Virginia Woolf), injected an astringent tone into many of the *DNB*'s often stylish histories of the significant or merely noteworthy figures—generals, admirals, statesmen, writers, artists, scientists, scholars, royalty, and (mostly) clergymen—in Britain's past (he believed, he said, in the "real value of good, sweeping, outrageous cynicism"). The editors of this entirely new edition have retained the best features of the original, and they've accomplished the extraordinary: their work, on nearly every level, outshines its predecessor. All 38,600 persons covered in the original have kept their places (though 70 percent of their biographies were entirely rewritten, and the rest substantially revised and expanded). And the editors have added 16,300 new ones. These include Americans born before independence (the Founding Fathers among them) and foreigners who spent a significant period of time in, or made important observations on, Britain; Eric Hobsbawm's 8,700-word article on Karl Marx is now by far the most incisive introduction to that gloomy revolutionary, "known from student days to his intimates as Mohr (the Moor)." The new *DNB*'s temporal range goes back to Piltdown Man (whose entry begins, "Archaeological hoax, never really existed"); its imaginative sweep extends to John Bull and Britannia (and also to King Arthur and Robin Hood, who were included in the original). More important, it isn't (in the words of one of its editors) "merely a roll-call of the great and the good" but also "a gallimaufry of the eccentric and the bad"—here are soothsayers, thieves, hangmen, and impostors. The



OXFORD DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY

edited by H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison

Oxford

tone is usually dry and often witty; I've had more fun with this book (I've read what amounts to a minuscule sample, about 900 pages) than with almost any other I can remember. To be sure, the first aim of the *DNB* is to be authoritative, and it pays a price in fulfilling that purpose. The recognized (and predictable) experts on their subjects, mainly academics, have written most of the entries—which means, inevitably, a certain number of conventional and workmanlike biographies. But the writing is always clear, frequently graceful, and more than occasionally sharp. Of the tens of thousands of entries, hundreds are masterpieces of pen portraiture, a literary art at which the British since at least John Aubrey have excelled. Many of the often lengthy articles (the one devoted to J. S. Mill is more than 21,500 words, the great and sassy Foreign Secretary and Prime Minister Lord Salisbury's 15,600, and George Eliot's 13,800), which assess not only the career but also the private life, character, work, and posthumous reputation of a subject, resemble—in fact, are—gemlike biographies rather than dictionary entries. The best achieve complexity and nuance but utterly lack superfluity. Costing \$13,000 and taking up twelve feet of shelf space, these volumes exceed the budgets and storage capacities of nearly all private book buyers. But a subscription to the online version costs \$295 annually. It's much easier to handle than the print version, allows readers to search in various imaginative ways, including by theme (every British saint, every Foreign Secretary), and—an important bonus—contains every article from the original edition. But you do lose one of the great pleasures of this work, which is the serendipitous discovery that comes from leisurely browsing. A publisher responsible for this tour de force and the *Oxford English Dictionary* is doing God's work.

The **Encyclopedia of the Great Plains**, edited by David J. Wishart (Nebraska), dissects nearly every aspect of the region but is especially strong on Native American history and warfare (refreshingly, stressing competition and conflict among the tribes)

and on perhaps the Plains' most characteristic features: weather and physical environment (Wishart is a geographer). But the 919-page book suffers from a clumsy and somewhat PC organizational scheme. In an effort to "emphasize the contributions" of hitherto "overlooked" groups, the editor has eschewed a straight A-to-Z structure in favor of thematic chapters containing alphabetically arranged entries (the same choppy organization mars the otherwise excellent 1989 *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*). The result is that Langston Hughes and Gwendolyn Brooks are discussed in the "African Americans" chapter, but Ralph Ellison is covered in "Literary Traditions." (I was happy to see that Willa Cather also made it into "Literary Traditions," but I first looked for her, as probably the finest lesbian American novelist, in the "Gender" chapter, where her fellow Nebraskan novelist Kate M. Cleary is listed.) Charlie Parker's entry is in "Music," but two other black jazz saxophonists, Ornette Coleman and King Curtis, are in "African Americans" (the need for this chapter is itself somewhat unclear, since the encyclopedia notes that "viewed at the national scale, the Great Plains, along with the intermontane West, have the lowest populations of African Americans"; the same is true for Asian-Americans, another group granted its own chapter). And what's Charlie Parker doing here at all? He was born in Kansas City, Kansas, which according to the encyclopedia's criteria is (just barely) in the region, but he moved at seven to Kansas City, Missouri, which the encyclopedia excludes from the Great Plains. Place of birth, it seems, is sometimes enough to be given an entry: what else could explain Demi Moore's inclusion? She was born in Roswell, New Mexico, but moved more than thirty times before settling in West Hollywood at age thirteen. (There's no excuse for including Moore in the "Film" chapter but omitting James Garner, an actor who has always identified himself as an Oklahoman—he was born in Norman—and who is the embodiment of the decent, easygoing plainsman. On the other hand, that chapter correctly avers that Terrence

Malick's *Days of Heaven* "is perhaps the most ... beautiful depiction of the Great Plains ever created on film.")

The weather on the Great Plains is probably the most violent and extreme on earth. It shapes the lives and outlook of the region's inhabitants in myriad and subtle ways, and the disasters it has spawned have entered folk memory. The most haunting weather-related event remains the "School Children's Storm" of 1888, which David Laskin recounts in **The Children's Blizzard** (HarperCollins), a terrifying and often vivid if somewhat padded chronicle. The morning of January 12, 1888, was unusually warm on the Plains, and children across the region went off to their rural schoolhouses without coats and gloves. But later that day one of the most devastating blizzards in history struck the region without warning. The temperature fell eighteen degrees in three minutes and kept dropping, quickly reaching 40° below zero. Sixty-mile-an-hour winds carrying pulverized snow as fine as confectioner's sugar blinded every creature on the prairie. Teachers and their charges faced a terrible choice: remain indefinitely in the schoolhouses (many of which had their doors and roofs blown off), with insufficient fuel, or try to get home. Most chose the latter course. Many became lost as they struggled over often astonishingly short distances to safety. By the following morning thousands of farm animals and 250 to 500 people, mostly children, were dead—many of them literally yards from shelter. Laskin skillfully weaves together a clear report and explanation of the meteorological event (the word "blizzard," by the way, originated on the Plains) with harrowing accounts of slow death, loss, and survival—which contain the usual mixture of heroism and cowardice, altruism and selfishness, fecklessness and pluck. This book and O. E. Rolvaag's *Giants in the Earth* should be read by anyone wishing to fathom the terrible cost of settling that desolate, dangerous, and beautiful land.

I approached **The Encyclopedia of Chicago**, edited by James R. Grossman, Ann Durkin Keating, and Janice L. Reiff (Chicago), with trepidation.

Urban history has for some time been in academic vogue, and although this has produced a number of important books, some of which have examined Chicago (William Cronon's *Nature's Metropolis* foremost among them), it has also engendered more than its share of silly, trendy, and jargon-clotted scholarship with a flair for the obvious. I was further put off by the introduction, in which—in that self-conscious combination of academese and the colloquial of which professors are now so fond—the editors explain that the book “is a mapping of Chicago’s geographic turf, complemented by a comparable cartography of boundaries that are more conceptual and topical than spatial.” But the writing in this unusually handsome and functional 1,104-page volume ranges from clear if pedestrian to pithy and clever, and in fact the editors have brilliantly met the greatest challenge that such a project presents: reconciling depth and breadth. The span of subjects—from Uruguayans in Chicago to crime to the deep tunnel system—is nearly comprehensive (I wish, though, that the entry on clubs had included, along with ethnic clubs and the Odd Fellows, the elites’ Chicago, Standard, and Union League Clubs—in which, after all, many of the decisions that have affected the city’s and the country’s economy were made). More important, the editors smartly chose “forests over ‘trees’” for entries: the encyclopedia contains dozens of uniformly concise, intelligent, analytical essays (from 1,000 to 4,000 words) on subjects ranging from commercial banking to architecture (there are also separate essays on city planning, housing types, and the “built environment”), along with twenty-one interpretive essays that synthesize and explicate the current state of scholarship in such narrow but fecund areas as environmental politics and the history of Chicago-based sociology. Some entries, like that for the University of Chicago, fail to put their subjects in a sufficient national and international context. And although the encyclopedia covers all seventy-seven Chicago community areas (in addition to thirty-three neighborhoods), and all 298 incorporated municipalities in the

greater metropolitan area, too many of these entries lack subjective description and sociological background; readers will learn that Hinsdale is a commuter town, for instance, but not what sort of commuters it has attracted over time, or the ways in which it differs from such municipalities as Western Springs and Morris. (The editors note the anemic state of scholarship on the suburbs from which contributors could draw; most of these entries required research in primary sources.) But despite the edi-

tors’ opaque declaration that “the maps ... seek to communicate vital features of the urban community’s embeddedness in physical space and the unique configurations of place that this has produced over time,” the many maps here (most of which were created for the encyclopedia) enormously widen and deepen the discussion presented in the text. At once highly analytical and exceptionally comprehensible, they’re the most illuminating and provocative that I’ve encountered in a single book.

BOOKS OF THE YEAR

THE ORIGINS OF THE FINAL SOLUTION
by Christopher R. Browning (Nebraska)

OXFORD DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY: From the Earliest Times to the Year 2000
edited by H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford)

THE REFORMATION: A History
by Diarmaid MacCulloch (Viking)

THE BIRTH OF THE PALESTINIAN REFUGEE PROBLEM REVISITED
by Benny Morris (Cambridge)

RUNAWAY: Stories
by Alice Munro (Knopf)

CATAclysm: The First World War as Political Tragedy
by David Stevenson (Basic)

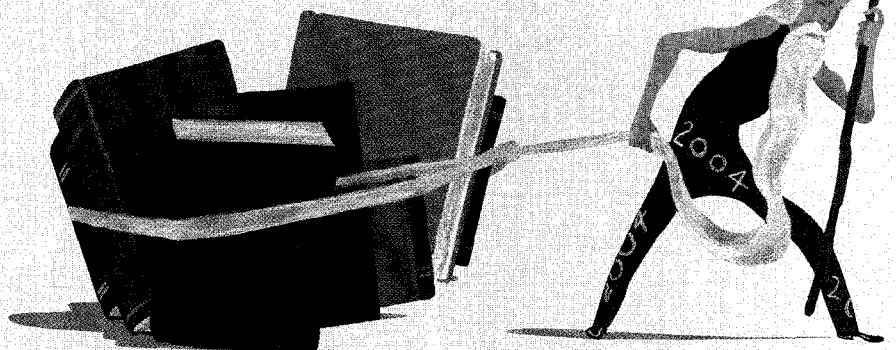
HONORED GUEST: Stories
by Joy Williams (Knopf)

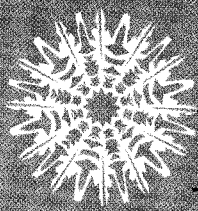
A “book of the year” is one from which you should be able to derive pleasure and profit a decade hence. That eliminates books that are important only for the moment—that is, most political and policy books (even such an important contribution to today’s foreign-policy debate as *Imperial Hubris*, by Anonymous). It also eliminates a lot

of really good books that aren’t great or almost great (such as Muriel Spark’s *The Finishing School*, William Trevor’s *A Bit on the Side*, Edwin Williamson’s *Borges*, the bloated but important final volume of Norman Sherry’s life of Graham Greene, Ian Gilmour’s *The Making of the Poets*, and Michael Redhill’s regrettably neglected *Fidelity*); flawed but potentially great works in progress (for example, *The Coming of the Third Reich*, by Richard J. Evans); and also a lot of books that I think are getting undeserved attention and winning undue praise—among them Philip Roth’s *The Plot Against America*. (I’ve also eliminated enduring scholarly books that are just too arcane.) So, yes, this is a serious list. And although everyone in the “serious” book business decries the lack of attention to literary fiction, I find the lack of attention to works of serious nonfiction to be an even bigger problem. As I write, only one of the nonfiction titles named here has been reviewed in *The New York Times*.

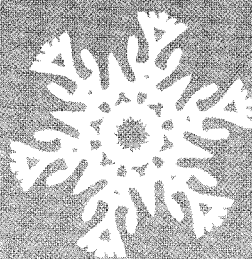
Finally, although this wasn’t a dreadful year in books, it’s one of the least good years for novels that I can remember. Readers will notice just two fiction titles—both short-story collections.

—BENJAMIN SCHWARZ

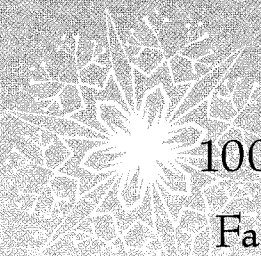




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Although hardly a boosterish celebration (academics never boost), the encyclopedia reveals Chicago to be a rich, fascinating, and economically, culturally, and intellectually vibrant city. Readers wouldn't suspect that from the recent re-issue of **Chicago**, by *A. J. Liebling* (Nebraska). Liebling wrote many fine pieces, but this thin (in both senses of the word) and angry book (one suspects he suffered some awful humiliation in the Second City), taken from a series of articles he wrote for *The New Yorker* during his nearly year-long stay in the city in 1949 and 1950, exemplifies the worst kind of Manhattanite's sneering parochialism and willful ignorance of the lands beyond the Hudson.

FICTION

Honored Guest, by *Joy Williams* (Knopf). This beautiful but unsettling book is Williams's first collection of stories in fourteen years. Set from Maine to Arizona to Guatemala, these tales of broken, sometimes stoic, often erratic people almost all circle around loss. (In the bleak and touching title piece, among the best American short stories of the past two decades, a mother and her precocious, devoted teenage daughter vacillate between terror and annoyance, tenderness and fury, as they wait for the mother slowly to die.) On various levels Williams jolts and jars the reader. She punctuates her stark, sad tales with a sly, mordant wit. Death visits without forewarning, violence erupts without provocation (that violence is often directed at animals; Williams is exquisitely sensitive to the casual cruelty as well as the premeditated savagery that human beings inflict on them). A supremely controlled writer, she narrates her off-kilter stories (one of which appeared in this magazine) in a flat, perfectly modulated voice, deploying startling yet precise diction and smoothly rapid, almost cinematic transitions. Williams is, as her champions claim, the heir to Flannery O'Connor—but she's also among the most original fiction writers at work today. ■

Benjamin Schwarz is the literary editor and national editor of The Atlantic.

BOOKS

Leave Them and Love Them

In Alice Munro's fiction, memory and passion reorder life

BY LORRIE MOORE

In the myth-inflected world of Alice Munro's recent fiction, when a daughter disappears, the mother's crops are not left to wither as she searches. Instead the mother is more likely to stay put and now, with more time on her hands, actually begin a garden at long last, the plants taking hold rather nicely, though they be, to a large extent, forget-me-nots, bittersweet, or rue. Great literature of the past two centuries has sentimentalized politics, crime, nature, and madness, but seldom the family, and the wrenching incompatibility of a woman's professional or artistic expression with her familial commitments has made its way into the most undidactic of literary minds. It has appeared, to powerful and unexpected effect, in much of Munro's work, especially her most recent collection, *Runaway*. In "Silence" a mother who has come late to her vocation (in one of several apparent stand-ins for literary work, she is a local talk-show host with renowned powers of sympathy), and whose daughter has fled to some kind of alternative spiritual retreat, punishing her mother with discontinued contact, begins a life of solitude and herb-growing. That same mother's parents, in a kind of back-story titled "Soon," happily take up berry and vegetable farming after their daughter has left home. Ambivalent parenting abounds. In "Trespases" a discontented mother's psychological preoccupation contributes to the accidental death of her young daughter. In "Passion" a young wife with "pouches of boredom" at her mouth and a "bitter tinkle of a laugh" explains to her in-laws, "I don't have any appetite anyway, what with the heat and the joys of motherhood," and then promptly lights up a cigarette. "Families were like a poison in your blood," a character in the collection's title story thinks.

DAVID JOHNSON

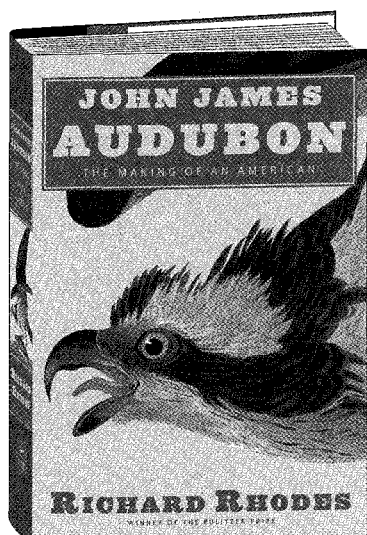


There are no happy endings here, but neither are these tales tragedies. They are constructions of calm perplexity, coolly observed human mysteries. One can feel the suspense, poolside, as well as any reader of *The Da Vinci Code*; one can cast a quick eye toward one's nine-year-old on the high dive and get back to the exact sentence where one left off. The thrilling unexpectedness of real life, which Munro rightly insists on, will in her hands keep a reader glued—even if that reader is torn by the very conflicts (work to do, kid on the high dive) dramatized therein. "This is the kind of fond but exasperated mother-talk she finds it easy to slip into," Munro writes in "Silence." Though they may close with the sleepy loose ends of secrets and dreams, these stories, like life as it is recalled more than as it is lived, move forward with

speed and excitement: there are train, boat, and car wrecks; weddings and affairs; the ever present whiff of suicide. They are determinedly full of the marks of change—cultural and emotional—upon individuals who are as startled by them as any reader. A historian friend of mine recently said, "I like Alice Munro's work because she captures so well those surprising moments of life that you never knew were possible, like suddenly finding yourself in a cornfield with your pants around your ankles."

Munro's interest in life's incongruous phases and fragments has given her stories their distinctive shape. Decades collide, intersect, are placed side by side in a charged and vibrating conversation. (Munro has said she sees stories architecturally, as a house whose various rooms one can roam in and out of, for-

RUNAWAY
by Alice Munro
Knopf



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going any prescribed order; this surely accounts for the nonlinear aspect of so many of her narratives. That memory and passion re-order a life and cause events to fall meaningfully out of sequence in the mind often seems to be Munro's point.) Four of the stories here are essentially two novellas composed of linked parts, carrying their characters from youth to late middle age. (There is less back and forth between time periods in these novellas than there usually is in Munro.) This is a successful length for Munro, because it allows her, by means of tableaux, to use time deeply and extendedly as both tool and subject.

The story for the ages here, however, is surely the title one, with its multiple runaways, its ghostly gothic moments, and its exploration of erotic love—all narrative ingredients Munro has made her own. Carla, with the help of a friend, runs away from her increasingly disturbed and hostile husband. She previously ran away *with* him, leaving

(1994) a man spraying schoolgirls with a hose (Munro's work is interested in men with menacing water, especially hoses; one or two of them appear in the current collection) is envisioned by the story to be a murderer. His is a crime his wife has had to accept—though, like the goat's death in "Runaway," there is a "brief and barbaric and necessary act" reconsecrating the marriage. In this new collection the story "Powers" concludes with the incarceration of a woman by her husband, after her psychic powers dwindle and can no longer satisfactorily pay the bills. The psychic wife knows what the husband is up to—or so the story, with its own clairvoyance, imagines. But she remains passive before her fate.

In Munro's world wives glimpse the cold wickedness of their men but must devise the psychological ceremony that allows them to set that glimpse aside. It is too late in their lives for them

In Munro's world only the very young have the emotional luxury of successfully fleeing. For a young person, a pristine heart untainted by the more damaging forms of forgiveness is still in charge.

her family—"their photo albums, their vacations, their Cuisinart, their *powder room*, their walk-in closets, their underground lawn-sprinkling system"—for a more "authentic" life. So much for the comforts of authenticity. Halfway to her destination of Toronto, however, "the strange and terrible thing coming clear to her" is that she cannot imagine life without her husband. As she flees, he persistently "[keeps] his place in her life ... what would she put in his place?" She is drawn helplessly (that is, erotically) back, compromised by grief and uncertainty, willing to pay whatever violent price is required to keep her marriage—and in Munro it is always a little violent. The loss of Carla's pet goat—she imagines, which is to say *understands* (there is no difference for Munro's female characters), that her husband has punished her by killing it—is an echo of the many violent visions that Munro's wives have of the men they've chosen, and of men in general. In "Open Secrets"

to do otherwise. Only the very young have the emotional luxury of successfully fleeing. For a young person, a pristine heart untainted by the more damaging forms of forgiveness is still in charge. In "Baptizing," from *Lives of Girls and Women* (1971), Munro wrote eloquently of two young lovers, one of whom has almost drowned the other (men and water again: in Ovid water fuses a couple's sexuality; in Munro it distinguishes and separates).

If we had been older we would certainly have hung on, haggled over the price of reconciliation, explained and justified and perhaps forgiven, and carried this into the future with us, but as it was we were close enough to childhood to believe in the absolute seriousness and finality of some fights, unforgivability of some blows. We had seen in each other what we could not bear, and we had no idea that people do see that, and go on, and hate and fight and try to kill each other, various ways, then love some more.

Therein lies part of the contradiction of feeling coursing through so much of Munro's work, which she expresses best three paragraphs later in that same early story.

Unconnected to the life of love, uncolored by love, the world resumes its own, its natural and callous importance. This is first a blow, then an odd consolation. And already I felt my old self—my old devious, ironic, isolated self—beginning to breathe again and stretch and settle, though all around it my body clung cracked and bewildered, in the stupid pain of loss.

The artistic self—devious, ironic, isolated—resides at odds with the tender lover self in the same finely riven person. Munro is hardly the first writer to worry this incompatibility; Henry James, in his very different way, devoted a lifetime to it and, like Munro, was often interested in placing that theme in ghost stories of both the natural and the supernatural kind. But she is one of the most explicit in noting its obscenity, its terribleness as well as its almost comedic unsolvability. Perhaps owing partly to this, her writing never loses its juice, never goes brittle; it also never equivocates or blinks, but simply lets observations speak for themselves. In fiction real turmoil is made artificial turmoil, only to seem real again; this is literary realism's wish, and one of Munro's compelling accomplishments.

"Seduction may be baneful," Elizabeth Hardwick wrote in *Seduction and Betrayal*, "even tragic, but the seducer at his work is essentially comic." Munro's romantically game women seem to understand this even as girls, and it may be the thing that gives them, especially in this collection, their fearlessness and dignity and resilience, also their outwardly sleepwalking, straight-man quality. How else to explain the sexual situations they so easily wander into? Juliet, in "Chance," quickly takes up with an older, married man she meets on a train, pursuing him to Whale Bay, on the British Columbian coast, although she has learned almost nothing about him and he doesn't even know her last name. In "Passion," Grace, cued by little except a notion that romance should involve impulsive-

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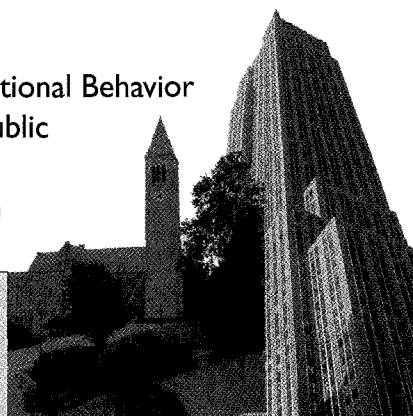
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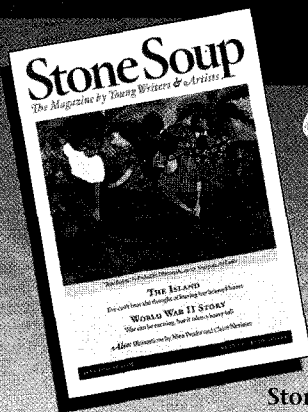
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ness, abandons her fiancé to take up for an afternoon with his alcoholic older brother, whom she has just met. All the women here are attempted runaways of some sort, and they seem to feel that the situation they run toward harbors more truth and hope than the difficult daily world they run from, though the story itself will not judge. Munro's women are unforensic in their knowledge—perceptive guessers, quiet visionaries, fortuitous survivors. And the stories are uninsistent in their stance. It has been said that erotic love, like certain religions, seems to contain the meaning of life without actually disclosing it, and Munro's narratives of this—though they may, in a paragraph here or there, advocate for mystery—in general back off from faith or argument of any kind. Munro's world, with its small violent corners, is a revelation of a specific element of human experience: the impossibility of life without tedium, surprise, or paradox. There seems nothing missing in this yet again brilliant collection. If the book's last words, regarding powers beginning "to crumble and darken tenderly into something like soot and soft ash," betray any authorial worry, the beauty of the line gives the lie to it. Someone writing at this level well into her seventies, outliving the female friends to whose memory the book is dedicated and who must have been part of its inspiration, is a literary inspiration herself.

But if there *is* anything missing, it may be "Hired Girl" and "Fathers"—two haunting stories that were published in *The New Yorker* some time ago but have yet to appear in a collection. Maybe even more stories are lying in wait. Such first-rate abundance is an astonishment in any lifetime, let alone that of a middle-class mother, and is—to rework Faulkner's quip regarding Keats—worth any number of young daughters. Though, of course, for the writer it is always more complicated than that. For the reader, however, it is a lovely and simple matter of greed and joy. ■

Lorrie Moore is the author of the story collections Birds of America, Like Life, and Self-Help, and the novels Anagrams and Who Will Run the Frog Hospital? She is this year's guest editor of The Best American Short Stories.



BOOKS

Shakespeare in Love, or in Context

If society creates art, as Stephen Greenblatt believes, then why was Shakespeare's achievement so singular?

BY CRISTINA NEHRING

Shakespeare is a biographer's nightmare. Not because the information about him is so overwhelming or incriminating but because it is so slight and so stubbornly innocuous. We forgive our great poets almost anything—suicide (Sylvia Plath), homicide (Ben Jonson), incest (William Wordsworth), hubris (Oscar Wilde), drunkenness (Edgar Allan Poe), insanity (Friedrich Nietzsche), sexual excess of every description (Byron, Shelley, Houellebecq—who not?). What we are loath to forgive is quiet respectability.

The things we know for sure about Shakespeare's life could be put into three pages and read aloud on Nickelodeon. Born to a social-climbing glover in provincial Stratford-upon-Avon, he went to school in his home town, picked

up "small Latine and lesse Greeke" (as a better-bred colleague put it), married at eighteen a woman some years his senior, fathered three children (one of whom died), headed to London and became the best-loved playwright of his day, performed the parts of elderly

WILL IN
THE WORLD
by Stephen Greenblatt
W. W. Norton

men, struck advantageous financial deals, and bought himself gentleman status in the form of a coat of arms. He then moved his family into the finest house in Stratford, retired at around fifty, and died at fifty-two, having written a will that virtually disinherited a daughter who married unwisely, shortchanged his wife, and provided a model of what in a lesser man might be called control-freakishness. Not content to bestow the bulk of his fortune on his preferred daughter, Susanna, he specified that

after her death it go "to the first son of her body lawfully issuing, and to the heir males of the body of the said first son ... [or] second son ... and for default of such heirs to the third son ... [or] to the fourth, fifth, sixth, & seventh sons." This was not a man who left much to accident. This was not a man whom but for the capacious and shockingly imaginative plays that he left behind we would ever take for a free spirit.

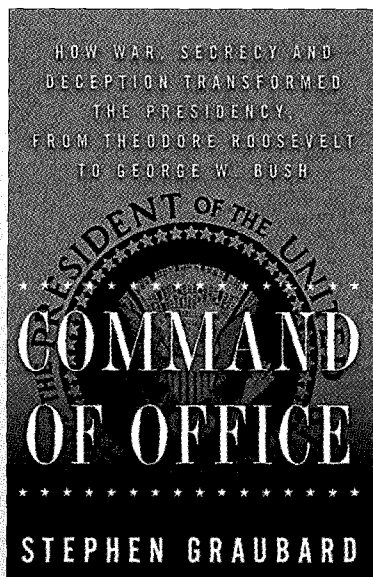
What is the relation between the singer and the song? We do not like it that the man who wrote ravishing scenes of young lovers defying their parents damned his own child for romantic indiscretions. We do not like it that the man who created the wildly witty, raucous Falstaff was not himself the life of the party—that he was not even, as his near contemporary John Aubrey said, a "company keeper." How much more gratifying for biographer and reader alike if Shakespeare were, well, Marlowe, or Thomas Kyd, or any of the many other playwrights who swirled around him in sixteenth- and early-seventeenth-century London. The lives of these men were full of duels, charges of atheism and espionage, barroom brawls, and breathless trysts. Maybe, we think, we just don't know enough about Shake-

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speare. But then again, maybe we know little because there is simply little to know. Perhaps Shakespeare just went home earlier than the others, risked less, bragged less, fought less, courted fewer women and disasters alike.

There were six dramatists on the scene when Shakespeare arrived in London in the 1580s: Robert Greene, Thomas Watson, Christopher Marlowe, George Peele, Thomas Nashe, and Thomas Lodge. They were all far more flamboyant and colorful than their Stratford colleague. They were also, in all likelihood, far less gifted. But we will never know, because every one of them save Lodge (who quit the theater) died far too young to have fulfilled his potential—Marlowe at twenty-nine, Greene at thirty-two, Nashe at thirty-three, Watson at thirty-five, Peele, the eldest, at thirty-nine.

There are artists whose art is life: Marlowe and Greene, to be sure, but also Oscar Wilde, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Henry Miller. Such artists may produce great literature as a by-product of their genius, but it will always be, to steal Milton's phrase, the work of their left hand. Then there are artists whose literature is the work of their right hand, who strategically retreat behind self-effacing, innocuous, or saccharine personas. T. S. Eliot the bank clerk, Philip Larkin the library drone, Sylvia Plath the bubbly blonde housewife—the personas can't require too much work, because the mind behind them is working feverishly. Such a persona had "Gentle Shakespeare," as one less gentle contemporary characterized him. He did not have time to attend to his mask. He was too busy attending to the parade of personalities in his mind.

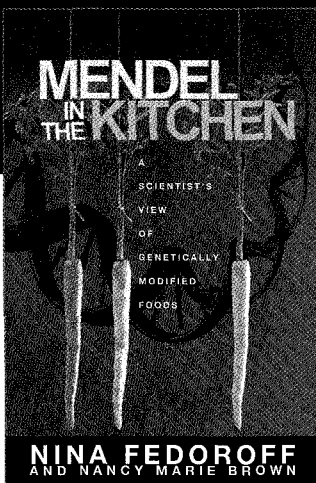
This does not mean that the world was unimportant to him. It fairly bursts through the seams of his drama. Nobody knows better than Stephen Greenblatt how much the world mattered to Shakespeare. Greenblatt, after all, is not just any Shakespeare scholar: he is the founder and leader of the academic New Historicist movement, probably the most influential school of literary criticism in America today. It proposes that great works of art result less from the solitary effort of a single artist than

from "the circulation of social energy," in Greenblatt's words. "A people will ... invent its drama according to its own history, spirit of the times, customs [and] opinions," he argues, quoting the German philosopher Johann Gottfried von Herder. Society creates art.

This conviction is everywhere apparent in Greenblatt's new biography. *Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare* is, more than anything else, the biography of an age. This is not to say that Greenblatt ignores several key issues about Shakespeare's life. He persuasively addresses, for instance, how the Stratford schoolboy could have grown intrigued with London theater and acquired both the skills and the inspiration to write plays of his own. He is refreshingly frank about the quiet fiasco that was Shakespeare's marriage. Unlike many of his predecessors, he does not bend over backward to contrive some secret affectionate meaning in Shakespeare's ungenerous bequest of his "second-best bed" to his wife. On the contrary, he points out that it was an afterthought; the first draft of Shakespeare's will allotted his partner of thirty-four years precisely nothing.

Greenblatt is far less persuasive about Shakespeare's father, who he gratuitously decides was an alcoholic, because his fortunes declined in midlife and his son's plays "depicted heavy drinkers from close up." For John Shakespeare's decline numerous explanations suggest themselves. John Shakespeare was in trouble with the law almost from the start of his career; his social ambition attracted him repeatedly to illegal financial transactions, any one of which could easily have thrown him into a tailspin. As for the younger Shakespeare's intimate knowledge of drinking, why, most of his theater friends were formidable drinkers—as, indeed, he may have been himself. In any case, the only explanation for his death, within decades of it, was that he "had a merry meeting, and it seems drank too hard, for Shakespeare died of a fever there contracted." Even if this report is mistaken, it implies that he was hardly the teetotaling and puritanical son of an alcoholic that Greenblatt evokes.

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Shakespeare's drinking portraits are for the most part hugely sympathetic, even though Greenblatt unconvincingly claims the reverse. As evidence he cites a passage from *Hamlet* in which the prince, infuriated by his uncle's incestuous marriage to his newly widowed mother, sounds off about the vices of drunken celebration—the sort of drunken celebration in which his newlywed “parents” are at that moment absorbed. Worse, Greenblatt misreads Shakespeare's most famous drinker, Falstaff, fashioning the best-loved character ever to stride the English stage (even Queen Elizabeth demanded to see him again!) as an essentially reprehensible figure. To be sure, Falstaff is a rake, a ne'er-do-well, and a lousy soldier, not to mention horrifically overweight. But his gruff love for the errant Prince Hal, his wily, inspired paeans to sack (his liquor of choice), and haunting assaults on the honor that leads men blindly to their war deaths (“I like not such grinning honor as Sir Walter hath!” he says over the dead smirk of a military “hero”) may make Falstaff the most life-affirming and humane of Shakespeare's characters, as well as the most outrageous and brilliant.

Greenblatt insists that Shakespeare sides with the selfishly manipulative Hal, who at the end of the Henry IV cycle rejects Falstaff. This insistence is the more striking because a number of critics—most passionately and recently Harold Bloom—have associated Shakespeare with the rejected Falstaff, and Hal with the narcissistic young Earl of Southampton, whom Shakespeare may have courted in the first part of his love-sonnet sequence. It is a telling case of critics' finding the Shakespeare they resemble. Bloom, a famously corpulent drinker and a robust academic rebel so out of step with his literary colleagues that Yale had to create a one-man department for him, thinks Shakespeare identified with the boisterous, sack-swilling one-man show Falstaff; Greenblatt—a consummate academic insider, a king in his profession, and a man reputed to make no enemies—believes the poet identified with the politic, smooth-talking monarch-to-be Hal.

The larger problem with *Will in the*

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World, however, is that it pays infinitely more attention to the miscellaneous curiosities and marginal obsessions of the sixteenth century than to anything that seems pivotal in Shakespeare's life or work. We are offered tremendously detailed historical accounts of witchcraft on the British Isles. We are given the lowdown on "the sort of thing that put [King James] to sleep" and the sort of thing that woke him up. We are informed with faithful regularity of the ways in which enemies of the state (along with bears, dogs, and other creatures) were tortured during the English Renaissance. We also get a long chapter on ecclesiastical infighting about the existence of purgatory, and nearly endless speculation on whether and to what degree Shakespeare might have come into contact with Catholic recusants in his youth. All this would be well and good if Shakespeare were a religious thinker or a religious poet or in any way religiously invested; but,

Greenblatt's approach turns gold into lead. It takes texts of universal appeal and authors of genius and reduces them to catalogues of culturally particular—and contemporarily irrelevant—minutiae.

as Greenblatt himself admits, he pretty clearly was not. The only saints to which Shakespeare was sensible, on the evidence of his plays, were the saints of love: Romeo and Juliet call each other "saint," and compare kisses to biblical oaths. Elsewhere the Bard seems blithely indifferent to theological niceties, expediently mixing and matching astrology with Anglicanism, classical mythology with Catholicism, folklore with Judaism, and pantheism with legalese.

What we miss while we are being briefed on the scriptural and superstitious trivia of the English Renaissance is any engagement with Shakespeare's more obvious personal preoccupations. If he has a single play that tangentially invokes witches, he has twenty-some plays, 154 sonnets, and a couple of lengthy poems that centrally engage the madness and poetry, the hypocrisy and higher reason, of romantic love. Why does Greenblatt give us so little about this? Aside from a few passages on the

Earl of Southampton, whom Shakespeare may or may not have fancied, Greenblatt is silent on the sorts of relationships that may have inspired his subject to return so knowingly and obsessively to eros. Not even a reflection about the infamous Dark Lady of the sonnets.

Greenblatt is almost equally silent on father-daughter relations, another of Shakespeare's capital preoccupations. *King Lear*, often considered Shakespeare's greatest work, is almost exclusively about this. Two of the plays he wrote before retiring from the theater, *Pericles* and *The Winter's Tale*, and also the very last, *The Tempest*, stand and fall on the bond between fathers and daughters. Within a few years of writing so feelingly of Prospero and Miranda in *The Tempest*, Shakespeare signed over practically his entire fortune to his daughter Susanna—at the expense of his wife, his other child, and even the poor of Stratford. Surely there is something here for Greenblatt to explore.

But then, love, whether between parent and child or man and woman, is not, historically, of interest to New Historicists. And this is the reason that Greenblatt's much awaited biography of Shakespeare ultimately proves an expression of academic fashion more than a study of genius. Greenblatt, like the literary movement he kicked off, is contemptuous of themes that go beyond time and place. "Transcendent" is a bad word among scholars in general and Greenblatt's historicists in particular, because it refers to any subject, pattern of human behavior, or existential question that is not "culturally particular"—that does not change from era to era, kingdom to kingdom. Greenblatt's reality, he has said, consists of "historically embedded social and psychological formations." The "commitment" of New Historicists is to "particularity"—or, one might say, to *peculiarity*. "Trans-historical" dilemmas like "to be or not to be," to love or not to love, leave them

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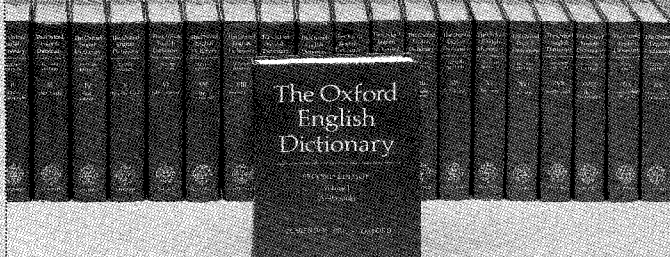
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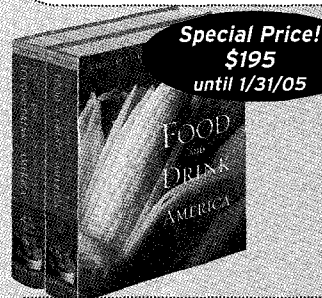


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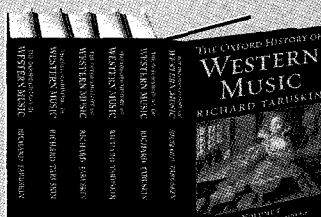
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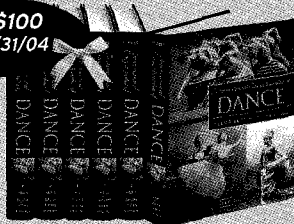
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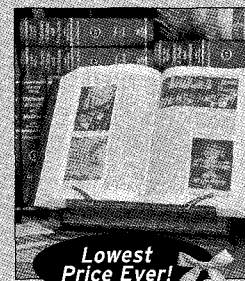
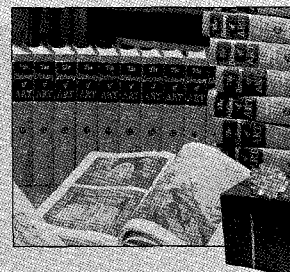
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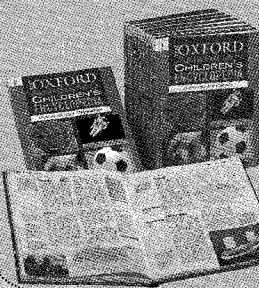
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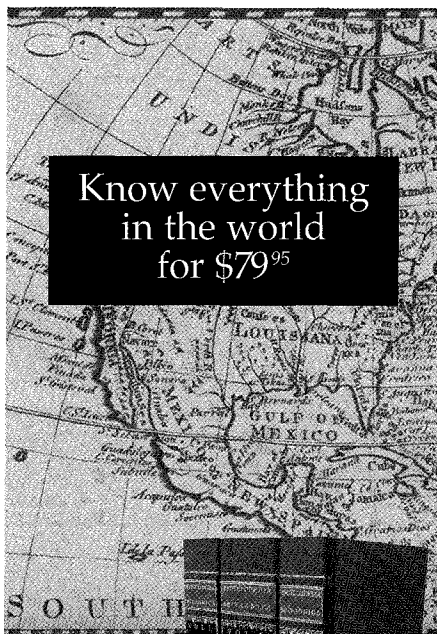
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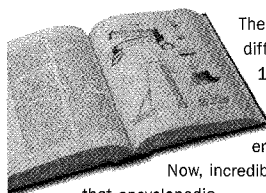
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cold. They pride themselves on their ability to look at literature and discover the forgotten customs, cultural quirks, and social idiosyncrasies behind it.

But ephemeral customs and cultural quirks are not why Shakespeare is arresting today, and to people all over the world. Amused as we may be by the ingredients of the witches' cauldron in *Macbeth*, they are not why we watch the play. It is *Macbeth's* universal themes—ambition, obsession, lust for power—that have made it outlast King James's dissertations on sixteenth-century demonology. It is the eternal problem of how to keep passion alive that brings readers back to *Antony and Cleopatra* rather than to some annals of Elizabethan political intrigue. Greenblatt's critical approach turns gold into lead. It takes texts of universal appeal and authors of individual genius and reduces them to catalogues of culturally particular—and contemporarily irrelevant—minutiae.

If *Hamlet* is not *Hamlet* because of its allusions to purgatory, Shakespeare is not Shakespeare because of the miscellany of sixteenth-century cultural influences on him. All his now obscure rivals were subject to precisely the same influences, but only Shakespeare became Shakespeare. Greenblatt's democratic instincts notwithstanding, communities don't write plays, and cultures don't write plays. People write plays. Individual authors working with universal themes write the stuff that survives.

In spite of himself, Greenblatt seems to realize this. In his own writerly practice he believes in both the universal and the individual that he officially renounces. A storyteller by temperament, he regularly compares tales from his own life with tales from, well, Shakespeare and his time. Trans-historical truth, anyone? And in the introduction to his most recent book about the new historicism he has no sooner sung a hymn to "social energy" and the virtues of collaboration than he discovers that he is unable to write the next chapters with his co-author. "Immersion [in the practice of writing] is not for us fundamentally collaborative," he declares, rather shockingly. "It is doggedly private, individual, obsessive, lonely."

If America's foremost Shakespeare scholar could give Shakespeare the benefit of such insights, there is no telling how strong a biography he might offer us. Greenblatt is an incisive thinker—not to mention an uncannily ingratiating voice on the page. When I first read him, as an undergraduate English major, I well nigh fell in love with him. His tragic flaw, were he a Shakespearean hero, would be not his practice but his theory. A survey of the writings of many of Greenblatt's followers quickly shows how dry and dreary is the fruit of this theory without the originator's personality to give it juice. Greenblatt's life of Shakespeare represents the best of the New Historicist movement. But it does not represent the best we could hope for from Greenblatt, or the best we should demand in a biography of the Bard.

They seemed so perfectly matched: the biggest literary genius of all time and the biggest literary scholar of our own time. But if they are well suited in some ways, they are direct opposites in others. Greenblatt has the personal charm Shakespeare lacked. Where Shakespeare seemed old at twenty, Greenblatt seems young at sixty; where Shakespeare was transparently, even unpleasantly, ambitious, Greenblatt is forever "giddy with amazement," he says, at his successes. But where Shakespeare was liberated by his work, Greenblatt is hamstrung by his. Indeed, his literary instincts seem almost the opposite of Shakespeare's. Whereas Shakespeare could never stop generalizing about mankind ("Thus conscience does make cowards of us all"), Greenblatt rejects such generalization, championing an endless succession of local details instead. Whereas Shakespeare seems to have kept social interaction to a minimum, Greenblatt is the herald par excellence of social energy and collaboration.

Or is he? Perhaps his private habits differ from his public theory. Perhaps if Greenblatt would only preach what he practices rather than practice what he preaches, he would move far closer to the playwright he loves—and move us far closer too. ■

Cristina Nehring is at work on a book titled Women in Love From Simone de Beauvoir to Sylvia Plath: A Feminist Defense of Romance.



BOOKS

The Minister's Tale

Marilynne Robinson's long-awaited second novel is an almost otherworldly book—and reveals Robinson as a somewhat otherworldly figure herself

BY MONA SIMPSON

Marilynne Robinson's *Housekeeping* is one of the ten best novels of the past century. In its haunting voice and its inevitable movement, both fabular and precise, it is a nearly perfect work, still as singular and eerie today as when it was published, in 1980. Yet many serious readers have never heard of *Housekeeping*. Robinson is absent from lists of the living greats. A Nexis search for her name yields only fourteen hits from 2003. Her relative obscurity most likely results from the fact that *Housekeeping* was for a quarter of a century an only child. Now Robinson has written a second novel. But because it has been so long in coming, it is hard to treat *Gilead* as simply that.

I avoided *Housekeeping* for the first few years of its life because I was put

off by the title, which to me suggested vacuuming and a middle-aged woman's discontents. (In 1980 I was a year out of college. Vacuuming? I felt generations past those old complaints.) But in fact *Housekeeping* is a story of the end of housekeeping, in the most literal sense of that compound word.

GILEAD
by Marilynne Robinson
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her two small girls to her mother's house, and then drives herself into a lake. (Her husband appears only in flashback; the children once saw their mother tear an unopened letter from him into four pieces and drop them into the trash, saying, "It's best.") The orphans, Ruth and Lucille, are cared for first by their

grandmother, in the house her late husband built, then by their maiden great-aunts from Spokane, who are frightened both of children and of the harsh weather in Fingerbone, and finally by another aunt, Sylvie, an itinerant who had been riding the rails. The right age, their mother's sister, Sylvie is the one the girls set their hearts on, even as they understand that she is, as people used to say, not all there.

When their mother drives the car into the lake, both Ruth and Lucille are under seven. Their kind, capable grandmother—a baker of pies, a braider of hair—is old. We know, as the girls do, that she will die before they're grown. The great-aunts are miserable from their first night in Fingerbone, and their dialogues, duets of perfect agreement, provide a comic interlude. We hear these ordinarily decent women talk themselves into leaving their nieces with a woman who would generally elicit their strongest disapproval.

So when Lily said, with a glance at Nona, "What a lovely dress," it was as if to say, "She seems rather sane! She seems rather normal!" And when Nona said, "You look very well," it was as if to say, "Perhaps she'll do! Perhaps she can stay and we can go!"

Once Sylvie arrives, though, the gentle comedy leaves the book forever. Slowly life unmolds from its usual forms, and the patterns of small-town propriety loosen. At the table where their grandmother once served fresh-baked bread and tart jelly, they now sit in the dark, Sylvie favoring canned sardines, which she eats with her fingers. The outside grows into the house. Nests and dry leaves round the corners of rooms. Eventually the girls stop going to school. The town deliberates about whether and when and how to take them away.

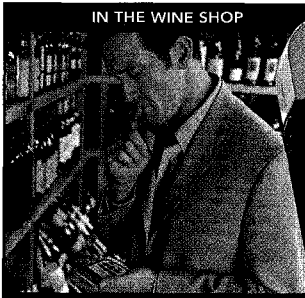
"Clearly our aunt was not a stable person," Ruth, the narrator, says, with characteristic understatement. Hers is a slim voice—sad, occasionally wondrous, and marked by a scrupulous determination to be fair. The elder of the two girls, she is inclined to forgiveness and praise. Ruth's voice is both plain and extraordinary. It is what one remembers years after reading her story.

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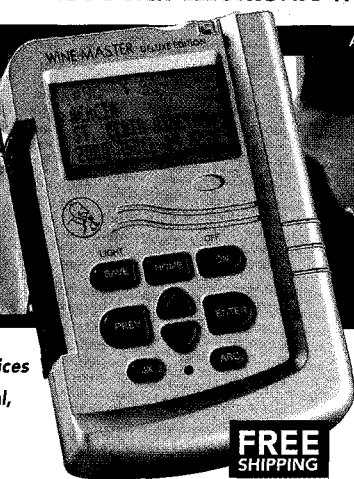
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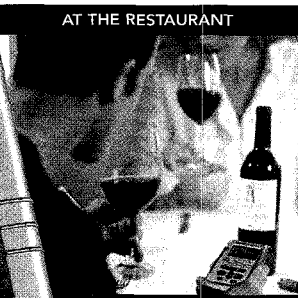


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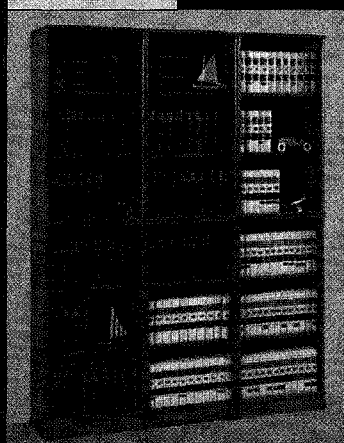
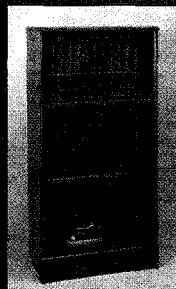
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Here is Ruth's description of her grandmother's belief:

She conceived of life as a road down which one traveled, an easy enough road through a broad country, and that one's destination was there from the very beginning, a measured distance away, standing in the ordinary light like some plain house where one went in and was greeted by respectable people and was shown to a room where everything one had ever lost or put aside was gathered together, waiting. She accepted the idea that at some time she and my grandfather would meet and take up their lives again, without the worry of money, in a milder climate. She hoped that he would somehow have acquired a little more stability and common sense.

This composition is a child's primitive miniature of predestination, containing not a single idea more than a young girl would have about theology.

Housekeeping's narrative unfolds chronologically. Its structure is elegantly classic, as the tension between the ragged family triumvirate and the conventional town shifts inward to a conflict between the two sisters, who have equal and opposing loyalties—one to their dead relatives and the other to the promise of life, with its gaudy hopes of dresses, dances, and romance.

Not long after it was published, *Housekeeping* was deemed a classic. One can imagine the small frenzy in the author's life: urgent calls from publishers, magazine editors, agents. In the terms of literary novels, *Housekeeping* has thrived—nearly 400,000 copies sold, even a movie. But no second novel followed, after five years, ten years, fifteen, and one imagines Robinson's telephone falling silent in Iowa City, where she teaches at the Writers' Workshop. The book, still read and respected, found its place in that category of cherished marvels that happen only once in a lifetime, like certain comets.

Now Robinson's second novel has appeared. I approached it with trepidation, remembering a review years ago that derided early critics of Gabriel García Márquez's *The Autumn of the Patriarch* with the canny accusation that they wanted to be "back in Macondo," the fictional village of *One Hundred*

Years of Solitude. I knew before opening *Gilead* that I longed to fall again under the sway of *Housekeeping*'s narrator. But the two books are related only in the odd way of siblings born years apart.

Gilead is the account of John Ames, a third-generation minister in Iowa. (It is worth mentioning that *Housekeeping* is punctuated with religious references. The girls' grandfather was a "silent Methodist"; spring is described as "the resurrection of the ordinary." And Ruth's location at the close of the book is unclear: we don't know whether she is still speaking to us from this world.) Over the years Ames has written thousands of sermons for his parish. He's got a life's worth in the attic. Now, at seventy-six, he tries to calculate their value.

Say, fifty sermons a year for forty-five years, not counting funerals and so on, of which there have been a great many ... Say three hundred pages make a volume. Then I've written two hundred twenty-five books, which puts me up there with Augustine and Calvin for quantity ... I wrote almost all of it in the deepest hope and conviction ... Trying to say what was true ... It's humiliating to have written as much as Augustine, and then to have to find a way to dispose of it.

Ames's end-of-life insecurities about his work are chilling, especially to a writer. Much fiction chronicling stringent self-sacrifice for an artistic ideal has judged that sacrifice a tragic mistake—think of Casaubon's "Key to All Mythologies," in *Middlemarch*, or John Marcher's wasted life in Henry James's "The Beast in the Jungle."

Like Casaubon and Marcher, Ames for a long time lives alone, despite his community's best efforts. He works on his sermons, sends for books in the mail, and consoles himself with baseball. Then one day a woman walks into his parish, and he finds himself, he tells us, "thinking day and night about a complete stranger, a woman much too young, probably a married woman—that was the first time in my life I ever felt I could be snatched out of my character, my calling, my reputation, as if they could just fall away like a dry husk."

Robinson deftly characterizes this young stranger with just a few snippets of dialogue. The woman asks the besot-

READING LIST

THE WONDERFUL, HORRIBLE LIFE OF HUMANKIND

From corruptibility to immortality, the human condition as revealed in four very different books

BY DAVID O. RUSSELL

The Fords: An American Epic, by Peter Collier and David Horowitz (1987). Like *Citizen Kane* only crazier and more outrageous and fun; everything creatively destructive about American capitalism captured in the story of one family, an industrial dynasty that endured alcoholism, family feuds, early deaths, and Cristina Ford's friendship (or more?) with Imelda Marcos in the swinging sixties. Final irony: Henry Ford, the founder, whose industry put an emphatic end to the nineteenth-century way of life, repaired in his last years to an ersatz nineteenth-century village of his own making.

Aftermath: The Remnants of War, by Donovan Webster (1996). Creative destruction without the paradox. Modern militaries have been extremely inventive in the use of poisonous gases, defoliants, and all manner of explosives, and many of this past century's fronts remain unquiet decades after treaties brought an end to the fighting. For instance, 12 million unexploded shells from World War I reside in the soil near Verdun. Since 1946 the Département du Démontage has been slowly finding and detonating these shells, and 630 *démoneurs* have died in the line of duty. We are clever and selfless both in destroying civilizations and landscapes and in reclaiming same. A testament to all that is indomitable and adaptable, for better and for worse, in the human spirit.

Seven Nights, by Jorge Luis Borges, translated by Eliot Weinberger (1984). Seven meditations, on Dante's *Divine Comedy*, nightmares, *The Thousand and One Nights*, Buddhism, poetry, the



Kabbalah, and blindness. Unbroken by his own now almost complete loss of sight, Borges continued the life of a public intellectual, delivering these in 1977 as a series of lectures, entirely from memory. His blindness marked a change, certainly, but not an end. "If I were a Buddhist monk," Borges says, "I would be thinking at this very moment that I had just begun to live, that all the earlier life of Borges was a dream, that all of universal history is a dream." Or a nightmare.

Infinite Life: Seven Virtues for Living Well, by Robert Thurman (2004). Thurman, the chair of the Department of Religion at Columbia University, explores the possibility that consciousness, like all matter and energy in the universe, continues infinitely, even if Western scientists haven't figured out how to measure it (and he wishes they would at least try to do so). "I'm very sorry to shake up the materialist scientist's sense of history and 'progress,' but long before Darwin and company, the Buddha and his contemporaries had already 'discovered' evolution ... It involves the subjective agencies of beings, intentions, and minds. It is not merely an impersonal biological process of atoms and molecules and cells." Consciousness can be neither created nor destroyed—a thought as frightening as it is encouraging.

The writer and director David O. Russell's latest film, *I ♥ Huckabees*, has just been released. His previous films are *Three Kings*, *Flirting With Disaster*, and *Spanking the Monkey*.

ted Ames to baptize her. "No one seen to it for me when I was a child," she says. "I been feeling the lack of it."

Ames's love story is a happy one, but because it is told in flashback, it never becomes a source of suspense in the

novel. By the time we learn that the old minister once experimented with hair tonic, to impress the stranger, we already know the outcome of this small vanity: the marriage is long settled and has produced a son.

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Gilead takes the form of Ames's journal entries, written for his child to read when he is grown. The narrative roams and circles, as diaries do, and is largely cerebral, with little forward imperative. In this sort of book all depends on the quality of the contemplation and the charm of the voice. Fortunately, Ames's is original and strong.

A fragile plot lands delicately on the characters midway through the book, when the ne'er-do-well son of Ames's best friend returns to town. The black sheep is the same age as Ames's wife, and the two strike up a friendship. Our minister, entirely admirable thus far, becomes less the goody-goody as his jealousy grows. (This turn of events echoes *Middlemarch*, when Casaubon—another old husband—becomes jealous of his young cousin.) As he eavesdrops on the pair, we, too, begin to wonder if his wife is falling in love with the reprobate.

Although the pulse of the novel quickens briefly, in the end Robinson remains faithful to her true interest: her protagonist's moral development, even at seventy-six. She is less concerned with whether—in the real world of *Gilead*, Iowa—Ames did in fact have any budding adultery to worry about. Ames comes to see his wife's life from a distance and to understand what he was able to give her and what he wasn't. Finally, he almost wishes for another kind of love to be waiting for her after his death. For readers especially interested in moral ideas, this resolution will be satisfying. But for those who read to find out what happens, or to have something actually happen, this purely internal expansion may not be enough.

As in most stories of holy men, it's the less-than-holy that tends to grab the reader's attention. A scrappy and perhaps shrewd editor might have told Robinson to move her narrator's building hatred up a hundred pages, to provide an Iago, to trust her plot and make more of it, perhaps to use Ames's suspicions to frame the narrative. In fact, *Gilead* contains a gaggle of broken rules familiar to any MFA student: too many flashbacks, not enough momentum, insufficient escape from a single sensibility. Whereas a dire sus-

pense—the fate of orphans—forms a strong spine inside *Housekeeping*, the story here seems overlaid, a thin vein on top of the book, not even covering its full span. It is as if Robinson has lost the taste for plot.

Gilead is an almost otherworldly book. Its characters are, to a one, good people trying to do right. Obviously a work of enormous integrity, it feels different in kind from the work of writers who produce a book every couple of years, rushing to meet alimony payments, one imagines, or wanting to renovate kitchens. One senses none of the rub of greed informing the writing of the book—but because it lacks the mess of life poking up from the bottom, one is also left without the urgency of fiction.

Still, there is much to admire in *Gilead*. It contains precise evocations of a minister's daily life. The religious elements in *Housekeeping* were somehow more ethereal for coming from a child's perspective. Ames's existence is quite earthy, providing a sense of the frequent banality of holy life. He complains about a "molded salad of orange gelatin with stuffed green olives and shredded cabbage and anchovies that has dogged my ministerial life," and finds that a certain bean dish looks "distinctly Presbyterian." He is frustrated when two people laughing together stop as he approaches.

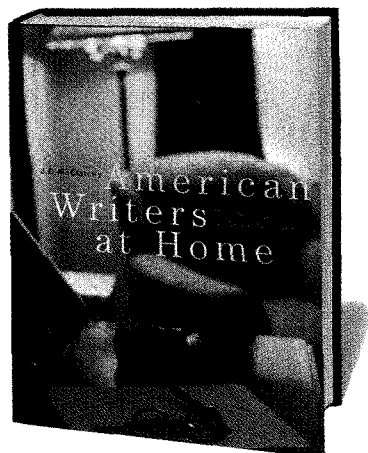
Gilead contains a lot of abstract theological rumination. The minister's obsessions are Robinson's own, a sense we have less from *Housekeeping's* elegant and elliptical religious references than from her book of essays, *The Death of Adam* (1998). Ames takes a common-sense but fresh approach to the varieties of religious experience. He begins one idea with the suggestion "If you think how a thing we call a stone differs from a thing we call a dream . . .," offered to support the plausibility of the existence of God. The line could easily have come from one of Robinson's essays.

Marilynne Robinson obviously can write an extraordinary novel. *Gilead* raises the question of whether she really still wishes to. One hesitates to define *Gilead* exactly as a novel. It is a beautiful book of ideas. ▀

Mona Simpson is the author of four books, including Off Keck Road and A Regular Guy.

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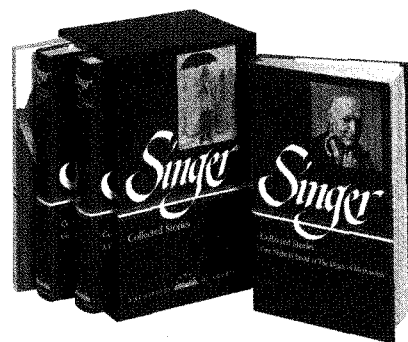


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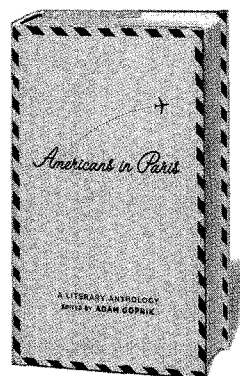
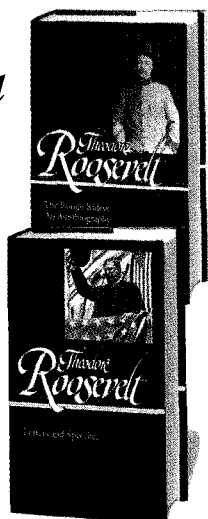
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BOOKS

Survivor

Victor Klemperer's meticulous diaries of daily life under East Germany's "soul-smashing" Communists reveal a man trying to convince himself not that the system was wrong but that it was right

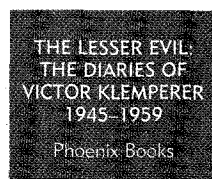
BY CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

The literature of twentieth-century totalitarianism, whether in prefiguring the epoch of Nazism and Stalinism or in drawing on it, often relied on *un homme moyen sensuel*—the luckless particle swept up in the process, or the worm from whose eye the titanic, forbidding edifice could be squintingly, even cringingly, scrutinized. Kafka's Joseph K was a prototype; Orwell's Winston Smith was given autonomy as a character only to have it very annihilatingly taken away from him. (Rubashov, in *Darkness at Noon*, was more of a Miltonian figure, flung from the heights of power yet still pitilessly judged by the standards of his former comrades.)

Almost a decade ago, in Germany, the diaries of Victor Klemperer were published. It became evident at once that this was a nonfiction event that quite eclipsed the journals of Anne Frank. Here was a middle-aged academic, converted from Judaism to Protestantism, who had decided in full maturity to keep a record of every feasible day (and some inconceivable ones) of the "thousand-year Reich": an enterprise that occupied him from 1933 to 1945 and filled two large volumes titled *I Will Bear Witness*. Superbly translated by Martin Chalmers, these appeared in English in 1998 and 1999, and gave rise to a very widespread critical and historical discussion about the Hitler period. Reading them, I noticed that at the end of the war—and after narrowly surviving the obliteration of Dresden—Klemperer had opted to stay in "East" Germany, and to identify himself with what became the German Democratic Republic. Given the attachment to liberalism and skepticism that he had demonstrated throughout his diaries of the Nazi years, and given also his addiction to journal

keeping, I felt sure that he would have kept up his solitary labor on the other side of the Iron Curtain, and that this work would one day surface. And now it has, in the form of *The Lesser Evil*, a fourteen-year personal journey through the academic bureaucracy and party-state institutions of the GDR. It ends a few months short of Klemperer's death, in 1960.

It is a disgrace that this book has not so far found a publisher in the United States, and I hope that readers will be able to bypass the bookstores and publishers and acquire copies by other means. (Phoenix Books is based in London; Trafalgar Square Books, of Vermont, is the U.S. distributor.) With this third volume we now



MARY EVANS PICTURE LIBRARY

have what is almost unique—a firsthand and intimate account by somebody who "survived" both versions of ideological dictatorship at close quarters, and who was in an unusually strong position to take, and to compare, notes. If Ameri-

can book publishers wish to give the impression that they cash in on Holocaust-related books before allowing their interest in Central Europe to lapse, then by this act of negligence they are well on their way to succeeding.

For all that, it is effectively impossible to begin a discussion of *The Lesser Evil* without reviewing some of the context and character of the preceding volumes. Klemperer was born in 1881, to the family of a rabbi in what was then Brandenburg and is now part of Poland. (To anticipate a question: the conductor Otto Klemperer was a cousin.) The father, an Orthodox Jew, switched allegiance to Reform Judaism when he moved to Berlin, and his sons "completed" this trajectory, it might be said, by converting to Protestantism. Victor took up the study of French Enlightenment literature, was an energetic literary journalist, married a Protestant musicologist named Eva Schlemmer, served in the German Army in World War I with pride but without great distinction, and in 1920 secured a post teaching Romance languages and literature at Dresden Technical University. Thus when National Socialism came to power,

in 1933, he had some reason to hope that his conversion, his academic position, his marriage, and his war record would give him a degree of immunity.

I should add, in all fairness and objectivity, that Klemperer also decided

that nothing would induce him to emigrate: he would remain a German at any hazard. But the consuming interest of the hundreds of entries that he was later to set down is this: it took him quite a while to appreciate just how futile this trust in partial immunity would prove. Not that he had any illusions about the nature of the Nazi Party, for whose propaganda and bombast he invariably expressed loathing and contempt. It was more that he had difficulty crediting the ghastly, inexorable fashion in which everything was taken from him, and from his wife. His marriage, position, and war record did, in fact, confer some rights on him: even the Nuremberg "race" laws made some grudging exceptions for those married to "Aryans." But this postponement only made him feel more keenly the deep-seated and protracted sadism of the "cleansing" of Germany. One day it would be that he could not ride at the front of the tram or use the university library, the next a ban on Jewish ownership of typewriters or automobiles. Then it would be the imposition of the Yellow Star, or the forced use of "Israel" as a patronymic on official cards and papers. Then Jews were kicked off the tram altogether, and always there was fresh trouble about the shops that could be used or the rations that could be claimed. Eventually came expulsion from his university post and from his home, and a confinement in ghetto housing that became more and more obviously the anteroom to deportation; and then the only terminus of deportation. There is a horrid fascination in reading this day-by-day chronicle as it unfolds, along with each cuff on the head and gob of spittle, because we know what's coming, and he is only beginning to guess.

I'll select an ostensibly trivial instance that is somehow appallingly eloquent. The Klemperers were childless (thank heaven, one thinks—as they must sometimes have thought), and Victor and especially Eva had become devoted cat lovers. A time came when the magazine *The German Feline* began to publish articles exalting the authentic German cat over the suspect and degenerate "breeds" that had been allowed to creep in. Then Klemperer

was informed that he could no longer make donations to the fund for the prevention of cruelty to German cats. Then all Jews in the Reich, and all those married to them, were told that they would have to surrender all pets, because dogs and cats and birds should live only in pure Aryan homes. Of this, in May of 1942, Klemperer minutes, about the couple's beloved tomcat, Muschel,

I feel very bitter for Eva's sake. We have so often said to each other: The tomcat's raised tail is our flag, we shall not strike it ... and at the victory celebrations Muschel will get a "schnitzel from Kamm's" (the fanciest butcher here) ...

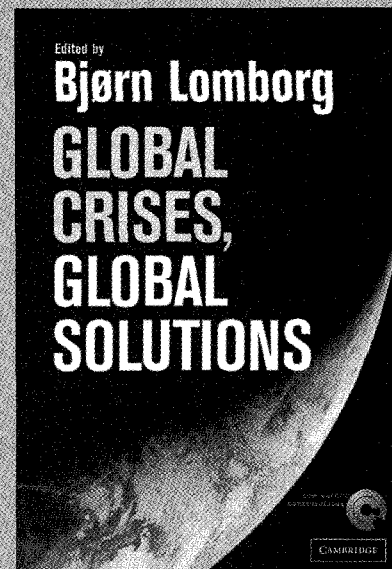
Unless the regime collapsed by the very next morning, we would expose the cat to an even crueler death or put me in even greater danger. (Even having him killed today is a little dangerous for me.) I left the decision to Eva. She took the animal away in the familiar cardboard cat-box, she was present when he was put to sleep by an anaesthetic.

Banish your sentimentality (and I have left out the most heart-touching passages): Is there not something fabulously grotesque about a regime that in the midst of total war will pedantically insist that Jews and their spouses either euthanize their own pets or surrender them to the state for extermination?

But even as the book is a bitter rebuke to all those who doubt or deny the methodical nature of the Nazi elimination policy, it is also a reproach to some of the more facile elements of the Goldhagen thesis, as put forth in *Hitler's Willing Executioners* (1996). Far from being made the object of hatred or violence by his fellow citizens, Klemperer is constantly being brought up short by astonishment at random—or even planned—acts of generosity or solidarity. Cuts of meat or fish are offered to him in rationed stores. Tram drivers abuse the Führer for his benefit. The man supposed to supervise the forced labor of elderly Jews gives repeated work breaks and takes every opportunity to express sympathy for the conscripts and disgust for the authorities. A worker passes by and says, "Chin up—the scoundrels will soon be finished." This persists even into the heavy Allied bombardments. Klemperer's friend Jacobi is invited into an

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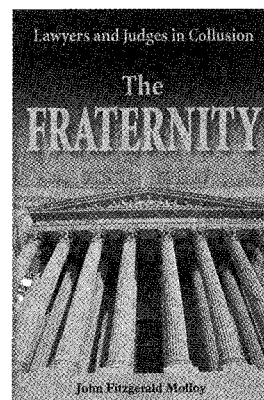
air-raid shelter that's off limits to wearers of the Star with the words "Come on in, mate." When Jacobi says, "But you mustn't say that," the worker responds loudly, "We're all mates—and soon we'll be able to say it out loud again." If there is hope, it lies in the proles ... Klemperer awards credit for this, and often mentions the exemplary behavior of communists and socialists, but nonetheless retains a certain reserve. Where are all the other Germans? Are they, as he suspects, in hiding somewhere?

Never much—or at all—interested in Marxism, he also manifests an abiding distrust of the Zionism to which so many of his fellows are drawn. To him, the point is to maintain his right to be a liberal German. He abuses Theodor Herzl in the roundest of terms, as a mirror-image race theorist and nationalist who would deny this same right in another insidious way. And he shrinks, as a good Voltairean should, from Martin Buber's religiosity ("makes me downright ill"). There cannot have been many victims in 1942 who told their diaries that they planned an essay titled "Pro Germania, contra Zion from the contemporary standpoint of the German Jew."

Most arresting of all, however, is Klemperer's decision to compile a lexicon of what he calls *Lingua tertii imperii* ("the language of the Third Reich"), in which he notes and analyzes the rhetorical giveaways of the regime. This *LTI* notation becomes a subtext of the book, and puts one in mind even more forcibly of the diary kept by Winston Smith. As in *Nineteen Eighty-four*, it often involves noticing propaganda claims, about production at home or victories on far-off fronts, that are simply too loud and too immense to be believed. Then there is the Nazi habit of collectivizing races or nationalities, so that it's always "the Jew" or "the Englishman," with individuality doing duty for a mass. To say nothing of the use of words—"fanatical," for instance—as extra-strong positives. Klemperer develops a way of reading the newspapers so as to notice that when slightly tepid terms are employed, things must be going really badly for German armies in North Africa or Russia. (His guesses are usually correct.) With some satisfaction he examines the

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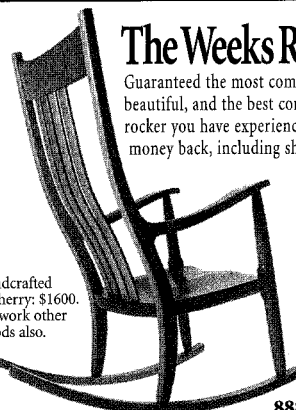
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death notices in the press and counts up how many of them are accompanied by a swastika or some other Nazi rune, and how many simply announce a fallen son. After the war was over, Klemperer published his essays on *LTI* as a separate book, which had considerable success in both Germanys.

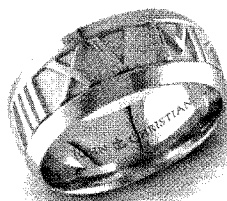
The Klemperer we come to know is a shrewd man, somewhat impatient with others and somewhat insecure, and fairly honest with and about himself. In one of his entries about the death of the cat, for example, he confesses that he resents his wife's giving a lavish piece of veal (the meat ration for some days) to the condemned Muschel as a farewell treat. By the time this third volume opens, we are accustomed to the sharp insights into motivation and character, and to the equally acute ear for falsity and pretension, that have helped him survive. We have also been introduced to an absolutely magnificent woman in Eva, herself a one-person refutation of the Goldhagen slur on the German character. It seems never even to have occurred to her that she could have saved herself by divorce; she had been condemned to join one of the last trains rumbling east toward the killing fields with her husband when the skies opened over Dresden, in 1945, and the Nazi authority went up in smoke. (She had loved the city, as had Victor, but said that her heart had hardened after the murder of little Muschel.)

In one of his diatribes against Herzl, Klemperer says that the man had an almost Bolshevik arrogance. From this and many other asides and observations it is quite clear that he was not in any sense a Communist; indeed, it's fairly plain that he was a relatively apolitical supporter of the old Social-Democratic Party. Yet his decision to take out a party card with the Communist Party (KPD) follows very shortly after the collapse of Hitler and the arrival of the Red Army. The Klemperers get their old house back, are offered compensation and many apologies (there are some mordant entries on the latter), and are able to have a tomato again. But Party membership was not required for any of this.

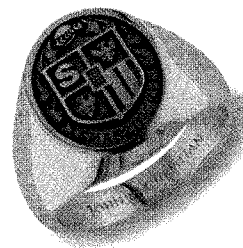
A mixture of motives can be dis-

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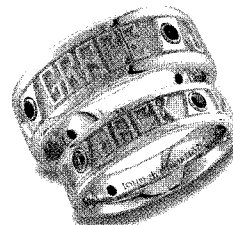
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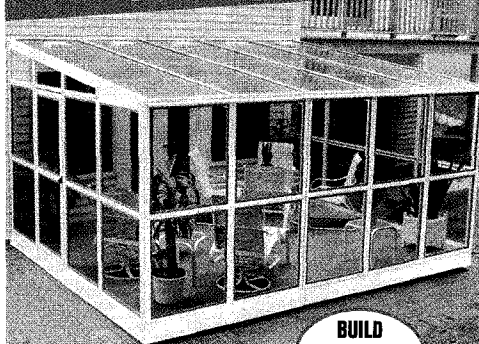
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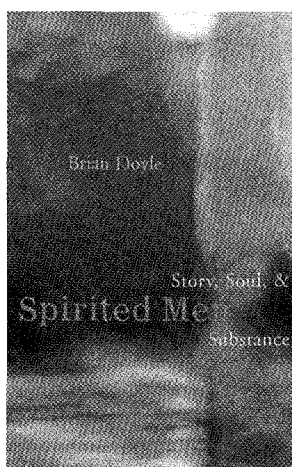
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BRIAN DOYLE is the editor of *Portland Magazine*. His work has been published in many journals including *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The American Scholar*, *Harper's*, and *Christian Century*. His previous collections of essays are *Leaping*, *Credo*, *Saints Passionate and Peculiar*, and *Two Voices*. He is also the editor of *The Best Catholic Writing 2004*.

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cerned. First, Klemperer feels that the most valiant anti-Nazis were the KPD and the Soviet Union. (That this conclusion involves some rewriting of history goes without saying.) And the VVN—the official association of victims of Nazi persecution, which he wishes to join—is quite clearly a Party front. But there is more to it than that. Deep down, and despite some memorable experiences to the contrary, he has ceased to trust the German people. In his mind, only a very strong regime will prevent the resurgence of anti-Jewish hatred that he regards as inevitable. This thought poisons even his better moments.

Historical context apart, Klemperer's journals can be read for their own sake as a gnawing meditation on the disappointments of life and the irrevocability of choices. He is intensely aware at all moments, perhaps because of his consciousness of being a “survivor,” that death is only a breath away. He is one of the great kvetches of all time, endlessly recording aches and pains, bad dreams, shortages of food and medicine, snubs and humiliations. And, like everyone else, he wants everything both ways. In particular, he wants East Germany to be an open democracy with a real intellectual life, while insisting that all manifestations of reactionary and racist spirit be pitilessly crushed. This double-entry bookkeeping is something that he usually has the courage to confess (“between two stools” becomes his preferred cliché) even when he knows that the contradiction is not resolvable. Thus, while hailing the Red Army and the intransigent Party even in the earliest post-Nazi days, he is beginning to take notes for a successor study of lethal jargon, to be called *LQI*, or *The Language of the Fourth Reich*. Here's an example, from a commissar-type critique he receives of one of his books—which, he is informed, must, “taking account of all objectivity, of all devotion to scholarship, nevertheless above all be couched in such a way that it meets all the demands of our new democratic educational reform, which of course *mutatis mutandis* also applies to the universities.” It continues, “Revolutionary times must on occasion make do with considerable abridge-

ments in order to accentuate the political line more strongly.” To that gem of what the French call *la langue du bois* Klemperer appends the single instinctive word “Revolting!” He adds that “class-consciousness” in this form is the counterpart to race-consciousness under the previous regime before reflecting, “Not quite as poisonous.”

Oscar Wilde's objection to the socialism he professed—that it would take up far too many evenings—has never been better materialized than by Klemperer's record of soul-smashing monotony and conformity. He dares not refuse to attend meetings of the Kulturbund, because this deadening outfit is a meal ticket. But once you are on one committee ... His acute sense of time wasted is intensified by his no-less-acute sense that he hasn't much time left.

The page-turning quality of the first two volumes isn't as urgent in *The Lesser Evil*, because although we know what is coming, we also know, at least, that it can and will be survived. When the workers of Berlin mount a revolt in 1953, Klemperer is only peripherally involved and gives the regime the benefit of the doubt while distrusting its propagandized explanation. One can feel the erection of the Wall coming on, even as one notices that Klemperer both does and does not want the segregation of Germany and the absorption of the east by the Soviet bloc. He died in February of 1960, just before that consummation of the Cold War forced so many of his compatriots to flee or go into internal opposition. It's doubtful that he could have nerved himself to do either thing; indeed, by then his nerve had gone. But toward the very last of the entries he says something that he hasn't said to himself before—namely, that the conduct of the East German security services is of a “Gestapo” type. For a childless man, also, he shows special insight in noticing how gruesome is regime propaganda when directed at infants. This is an *LQI* entry from May of 1959, taken from an East German newspaper interview, in which “Colleague Schubert, day nursery teacher at the 12th Primary School,” said,

With some groups in our nursery we have got to the point that the children

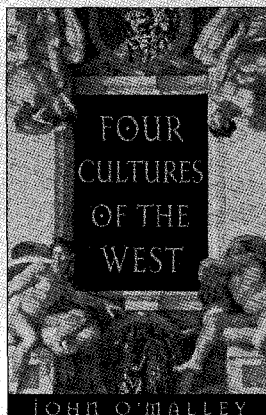
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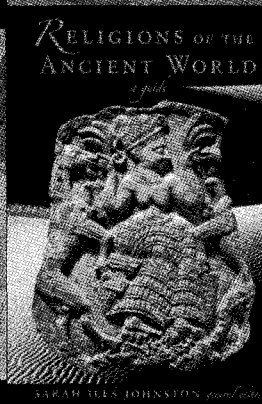
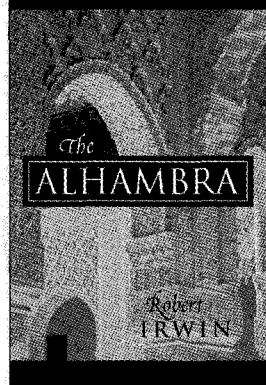
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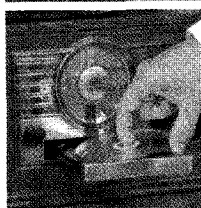
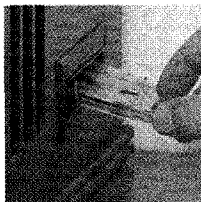
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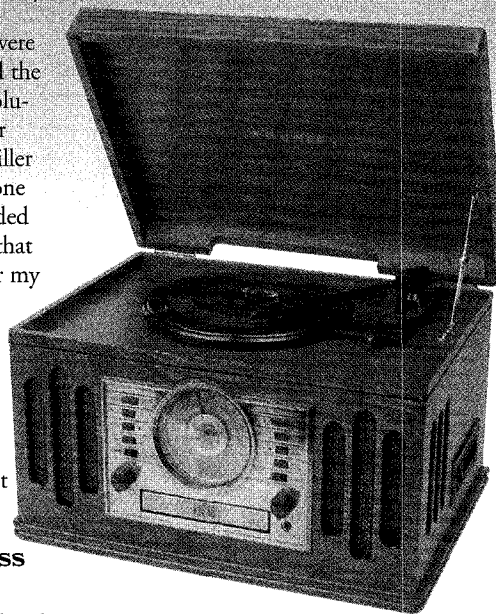
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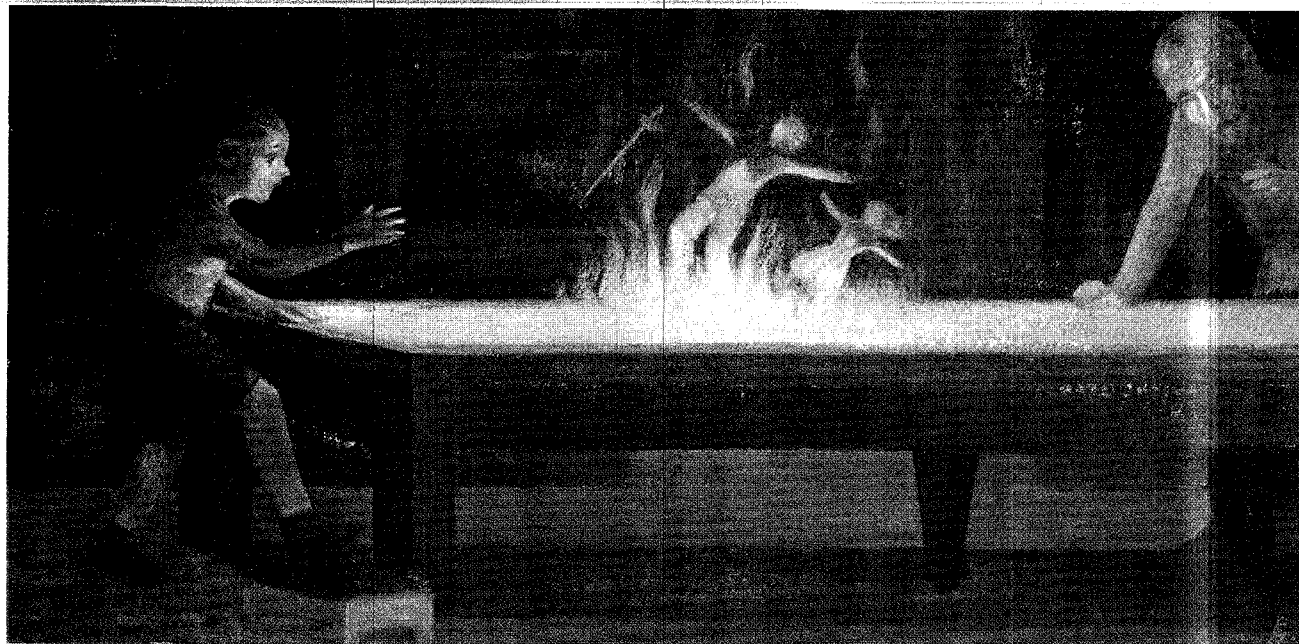
are already working independently and *learning leadership* ... From lunchtime, under the supervision of a nursery teacher, the children themselves take over. Thus we try to *teach leadership* to our worker and peasant children; because one day they will be in charge of the state.

Without pausing over the accidental absurdity of the second sentence, Klemperer simply notes that this is "purest Nazism, in *even worse* German!"

My Winston Smith analogy is obviously inexact in one way, in that during the Nazi period Klemperer was an axiomatically identified public enemy with no hope of concealing himself, and during the Communist years he was a man trying to convince himself not that the system was wrong but that it was right. His utter failure in this attempt is eloquent nonetheless, and amounts to a very strong and useful condemnation at a time when a movie of fatuous nostalgia for the GDR—*Good Bye, Lenin!*—can exert extensive box-office and critical appeal in the United States, and when former Stalinists and neo-Nazis are competing with each other to make a statist "One Nation" appeal in the eastern *Lander* of the Federal Republic.

In 1951 Eva Klemperer died; one is happy to know that she was to the last consoled by her new cat. Within a short time Victor had taken up with another woman, named Hadwig Kirchner, who likewise agreed to share his disappointments and struggles—and to put up with his evidently difficult personality—but whose deepest desire was that he agree to marry her within the Catholic Church and thus prevent her having to choose between him and holy communion. This he eventually agreed to do, so long as it could be arranged that nobody would know of it. One has the feeling that he would have made this a condition even in a state system that did not frown on religion. These journals are not the diary of a nobody, even though they were composed by a man who greatly feared that verdict. They are, rather, the life story of a man who in a time of diseased delusions tried—and failed—to live as if even comforting illusions were unnecessary. ▀

Christopher Hitchens is a contributing editor of *The Atlantic* and a columnist for *Vanity Fair*.



SHORT STORY

Harbinger Hall

A section of the bookcase slowly swung out into the room—a secret door, straight from a monster movie

BY BILL ROORBACH

Bobby Mullendore was sick of fifth grade, especially without his best friend, Jack B., plus it was spring. Pains-takingly, key by key, jabbing hard with each of his index fingers, he typed a missive in the exact language of a certain carbon copy Jack had given him as a good-bye treasure just this past fall.

Dear Mrs. Applegate:

Due to a career emergency we are moving as of 15 April, 1963. Robert will attend his last class this Friday, April 12. He will start school in North Carolina a week hence. Please accept my apologies for this short notice. It could not be helped, and we regret it.

After twenty focused, difficult minutes, after typing the “Sincerely yours” one letter at a time, Bobby pulled the curled paper from the Royal Standard, flattened it carefully, and signed his mother’s name.

That afternoon, at two-fifteen, moving against the tide of the other kids leaving class, Bobby made his way to Mrs. Applegate’s desk. She was searching through a low drawer, sat up straight when he made a noise, looked surprised. And just started talking, as she could do: “Robert! Well. Your homework is

better the last few weeks. Your hands are much cleaner too!”

Bobby made no response, merely presented the letter.

“Oh, my!” Mrs. Applegate said.

“Yip,” Bobby said.

The next day, Good Friday, Mrs. Applegate sprang a surprise, just as she had for Jack’s departure: “Bobby Mullendore,” she announced, “is moving.”

On Monday Bobby wore the same old clothes, but with the addition of one Sears Roebuck watch, a reviled Christmas present, strapped self-consciously to his wrist. Mom saw it and smiled inwardly but still visibly, knowing in her Mom way not to say anything. Bobby walked to the bus stop clutching his lunch, stood there a minute in case Mom should look down the road, and then leaped into the woods. Ancient Mr. Green stopped the old yellow beast, maybe even would have honked (he didn’t like to miss a kid), but a couple of Bobby’s former classmates yelled out, “Moved! Moved!”

Bobby could hear Mr. Green croak, “Bobby moved?”

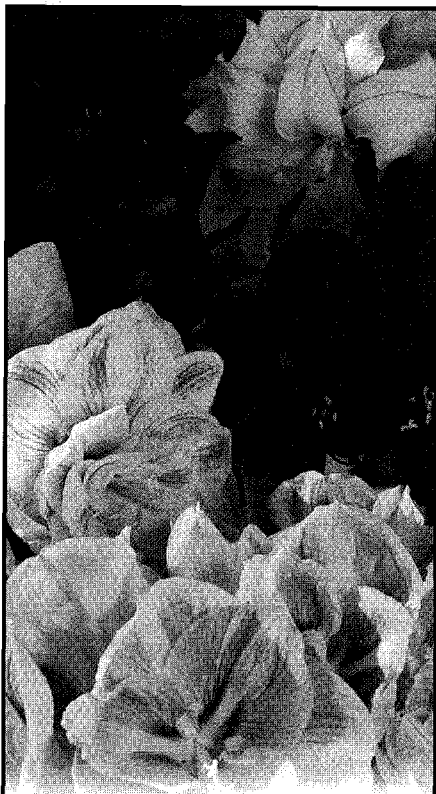
“Moved!” the kids cried.

Mr. Green said a merry “Well, okay, then,” and the bus roared off. It wouldn’t stop here again.

Bobby crossed Wahackme Road, trotted to Dogwood Lane, ducked past Mrs. Smith’s, trotted past the PRIVATE LANE sign, remembered to breathe, trotted along the high stone wall in front of the Schraeders’ house and into the pine forest along the needle-soft path that would take him to the old stone stable where he and Jack B. had found wondrous things: cigarette butts, beer bottles, a big girl’s bra, a pair of tighty-whities with Brent Lovelace’s camp tag sewn in.

All this was on the D’Arcy estate, the centerpiece of which was a stone mansion five full minutes on foot from the stable through well-kept forest on a wide bridle path. “From another era,” as Bobby’s dad phrased it. Jack B. and Bobby had often slipped up to the house at dusk to look in the windows; they’d seen only a maid in uniform once and, another time, a small party—old people having dinner on the great stone patio. Jack B. had had the tuff idea of blowing squeals through long blades of grass, which they did. On the patio the old people went silent in the night, and then they rose. “Now, what’s that?” one said. Another said, “That’s some sort of crane,” and another, “Rare, I should think.” Pretty soon they’d left their desserts and come tottering across the lawn to investigate.

Bobby and Jack B. giggled their way back into the woods, blowing parting calls all the way down the bridle path and luring the old folks on. Then silent:



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the birds had flown. "Scared them off," the first voice said. "Quite sure those are cranes," the second said. Nine or ten old folks huddled in a little knot there in the woods, where any ogre might get them. "A harbinger, I should think," the third voice said.

For months and months Bobby and Jack B. whispered those phrases under Mrs. Applegate's nose: "Rare, I should think!" Har har har! "A harbinger, I should think!" Gales of laughter. The "I should think" became part of the comedy repertoire of the whole fifth grade: "Sloppy Joes for lunch, *I should think!*" The boys didn't know what a harbinger was, and didn't look it up, but Jack B. used the word to name the estate.

Bobby spent his first day of freedom in the abandoned stables of Harbinger Hall, inspecting every corner of the place, looking out every bubbled window, finding things to discuss in a possible letter to Jack B.: six old horseshoes, a 1903 penny, a pair of girl's underpants with two curled red hairs more or less *pasted* inside (Lovelace's girl, Jenny Oswest, had red hair), rotting tack, the skeleton of a cat. He ate his lunch at 12:15 exactly on a desklike shelf in the groom's quarters, under no awful pressure to trade his Ring Dings for egg salad.

"**F**unniest thing," his mom said at dinner (fish sticks and tartar sauce). "I saw Mrs. Crawford at the A&P, and she said she'd heard we'd *moved!*"

"Empty-headed woman," Bobby's dad said.

Bobby hadn't thought till now that his plan had a possible flaw. But the train of conversation chugged quickly away from Mrs. Crawford to a "communication" problem at Dad's company in New York, and then to a similar problem at Mom's garden club. Bobby felt the safety of his plan settle in around him.

He stepped off the bridle path where he'd stepped off each day last week, and trotted into the forest on his recon trail until the mansion came in view. Now it was tree to tree, the Nazis in there holding Jack B., dark day, about to storm, and the microfilm in Bobby's pocket in direst danger of getting wet in the rain and fizzing to deadly acid.

He had to make the grand stone entryway, where he'd brazenly hidden his GI poncho on Friday's mission, a note to Jack B. folded inside it. Was Jack dead? Had Jack been able to decipher the encrypted message? The line of azaleas was a machine-gun emplacement.

Bobby crawled on his belly along a stone-lined drainage ditch and then to the driveway portico and the entryway, breathing hard. His carbine, a polished stick, turned into a stolen Luger. This he tucked into his pants for the climb, chink to chink, up the stone wall of the entryway, twelve feet high. Bobby put his face in the void where the poncho should have been. He held on to the rock crevices, muscles quivering with the effort. No poncho.

He climbed back down, pulled the heavy Luger from his pants, and let it turn into a machine gun, to be held with two hands. Who could have taken his poncho? The game had turned forty-five degrees toward the real, and his fear turned with it. He flopped to his belly in the fine gravel of the drive and crawled the width of the great entryway, hidden only by the lip of the single marble step. At the next corner of the house he peered around, peered into a study, saw the back of an old man writing at a desk. Writing orders to send Jack B. to the firing squad! Bobby stood and aimed his machine gun.

Exactly then he heard two sudden steps in the gravel. One enormous hand grabbed his collar, another the belt of his pants, and someone lifted him off the ground. A heavy foreign accent, very like that of the Nazis on TV, said, "Vat does this mean?"

"I'm just a neighbor kid!"

"You are spyink!"

"I live over there!" Bobby tried to point.

The man pulled Bobby up the step by the collar and belt, across the marble, through a set of massive oaken doors, and then through a second set and into an expansive marble foyer. Bobby's heart fluttered in his chest. He began to thrash, but the man just yanked him off his feet by his belt and let him kick in the air.

A maid—the very one he'd seen with Jack—appeared on the great marble stairway that rose straight ahead. She said,

"Oh, is this the person who's been ...?"

"The same," Bobby's captor said.

"I'll get Hilyard."

Soon a door opened, and a butler came into the great foyer, an unmistakable butler in actual tails, carrying the poncho in front of him. He said, "This is ... yours?"

"It's just my raincoat," Bobby said.

The butler produced the note to Jack B. and read, "Attack-way 0900 hours-way, ill-kay all-way?" Then, translating, he read, "Free you through back wall—stand clear for dynamite?"

"It's just a game."

"Use acid on maid's face?"

"I'm sorry," Bobby Mullendore said. He would not cry.

"What do you think, Dort? Shall we bother Mr. D'Arcy?" Hilyard said the master's name in three distinct syllables, like letters: D-R-C. He turned on his heel. The hand at Bobby's neck squeezed harder, urging him to follow. Prisoner and guards walked about a mile down a corridor of heavy doors to an elaborately arched stone doorway. The butler gave the gentlest knock. After a long, silent wait the thick door opened.

"My," Mr. D'Arcy said. He was the man Bobby had seen at his desk, the one Bobby had been about to machine-gun through the great windows. He was much older than Bobby's grandfather, and frailer. He did not look harmless.

"A game, he says," the butler said.

"And what game was this?" Mr. D'Arcy said.

"War?" Bobby said helpfully. "World War Two?"

"Do you call that a war?" Mr. D'Arcy said.

As the old man slowly smiled, Dort let go of Bobby's neck and retreated silently down the hall. The butler lingered, but at a subtle nod from his master sighed and padded off.

"Your name?" Mr. D'Arcy said.

"Bobby."

"Come in, then, Robert," Mr. D'Arcy said. "I've been expecting you." And the old man shuffled into the room, impatiently waving for Bobby to keep up, as if the boy were having a problem sustaining the old man's tortoise pace. Bobby performed covert reconnaissance on the surroundings; the room was all dark

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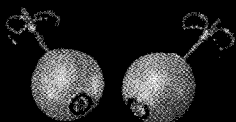
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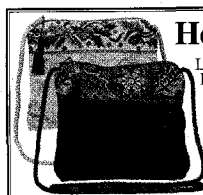


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wood. Books in dark bindings reached to the ceiling. The tall windows were filled with plants—some of them trees, really, growing in enormous earthen pots and pushing the dark, heavy curtains aside, starved for light. The floor was flagstone—blue and red and black. A dozen tall floor lamps lit the whole warmly. The fireplace, set with handsome birch logs, was as tall as Mrs. Applegate—she could put her whole desk in there and stand behind it, and her head wouldn't even be up the chimney! The brightest spot in the room was Mr. D'Arcy's desk, piled with books and papers and rubber stamps and a heavy old phone, all of it lit by two golden lamps. A tall accounting book lay open, a fountain pen uncapped upon it, work interrupted. Mr. D'Arcy straightaway recapped the pen and placed it in a golden holder. Bobby wasn't at all scared, he told himself—something about all the books and lamps.

Mr. D'Arcy smelled of cologne and looked pleasantly stuffed—taxidermy in corduroy. He was carefully shaved and trimmed (none of Grandpa's long ear hairs and nose hairs), his hair neatly cut and dyed black, shot with white strands, damply combed. His spotted hands had a little shake to them, as if they were conducting their own small orchestra. His face, when he finally looked at Bobby, was large and serious, full of spots and lines, yet something kindly was in it, something soulful and sad inside the hardness of the eyes.

"You want to play war?" Mr. D'Arcy said abruptly. He marched around his desk to the bookcases, reached for a book, and pulled at its spine. A section of the bookcase slowly swung out into the room—a secret door, straight from a monster movie.

"Tuff," Bobby said.

"Tough?" Mr. D'Arcy said.

"Cool," Bobby said.

"Ah," Mr. D'Arcy said.

The room beyond was dark until Mr. D'Arcy found the switch on a table lamp. When he closed the bookshelf-door, the lamp was the only light. He said, "Our map room." It had no windows, but a fresh breeze came from somewhere. Two walls were full of big cabinets with wide, shallow drawers. The other two walls offered complicated banks of roll-down

maps. Mr. D'Arcy shuffled around the room, turning the switches on another dozen lamps and gradually lighting a stately table the size of two Ping-Pong tables pushed end to end. A colorful map, almost as long and wide as the table, was already rolled out and pressed flat at its four corners with iron pyramids.

What land did the old map show? Bobby bent over it with sharp eyes. It was like a painting—somewhat crinkled, hugely detailed, the lakes showing waves, the mountains green with white peaks, the cities with ornate buildings, the borders with other countries orange and forbidding. The very lettering was foreign. Bobby had studied and imitated ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs; he knew the word "cuneiform." But he didn't know this alphabet.

Mr. D'Arcy let him look awhile. "Now tell me, Robert, to begin the game: what country is represented here?"

Bobby leaned closer, following a great river with his finger. "I can't read the names," he said. The lines of latitude curved narrower and narrower to the top of the map, where they nearly closed, forming a circle, and the North Pole was clearly enough delineated.

Mr. D'Arcy said, "Of course you can't read it. The alphabet is Cyrillic. That is your first clue."

Make-believe? Was it a map of—Cyrillia? Bobby didn't chance that answer. He kept up his close inspection, a creepy feeling tickling its way up his neck. He walked slowly around the table and away from the old man, examining the map all the while.

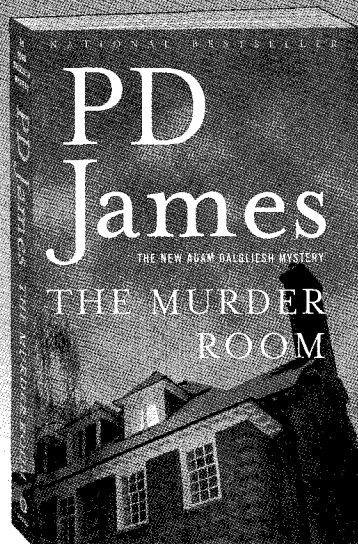
Mr. D'Arcy said, "All right, then. Another big clue: it is a country now part of the Soviet Union."

"Russia!" Bobby said. Goosebumps rose on his arms.

"You are correct. Now. To make things easier, let us find a similar map marked in English." Mr. D'Arcy shuffled to a bank of tall tubes and indicated the correct one with a knock. Bobby helped him lift it—it was very heavy—and helped him lug it to the table. There they pulled it out, unrolled it over the first map, and carefully weighted it flat with the pyramids.

"Russia!" Bobby said again. He recognized it now. *Sputnik! Spies!*

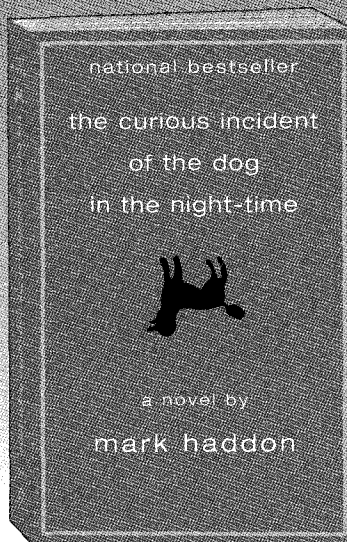
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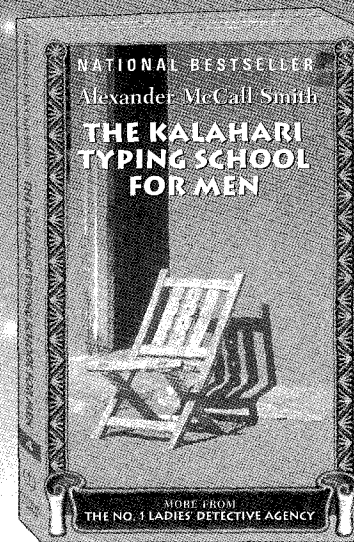


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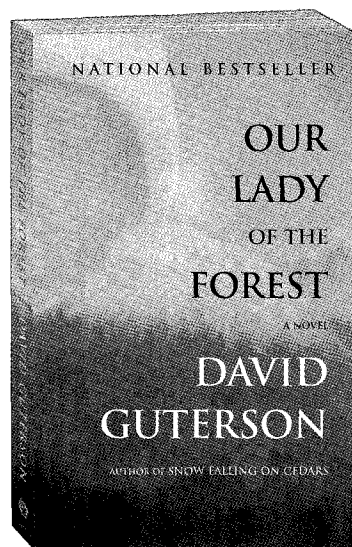
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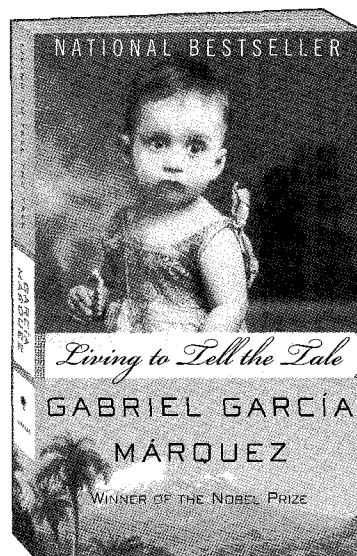
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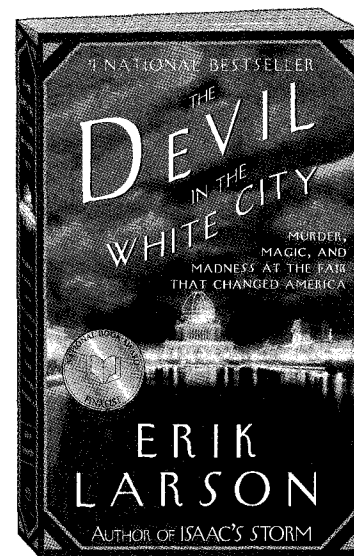


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"Relics, these old campaign maps. I buy them at auction. What I paid for this would build two houses. But see how beautifully it is made. It shows the Russia of the czars. Now. Here's our game. Let us call it Russian Revolution. All right? And we are czarists. Yes?" Mr. D'Arcy opened a drawer in the table and struggled to produce from it an ornate leather box. He opened the box carefully with both hands, tilting it to show Bobby what was inside: figurines—many large handfuls of tiny metal people, nicely painted.

"We live here, in Saint Petersburg." Mr. D'Arcy walked around to Bobby's side of the table very slowly, carrying the box of people. He placed it carefully atop the map and put a precise finger on Saint Petersburg. "But it is summer now, so we are here at our dacha, our summer cottage, I should say, just south of the great city. The year is 1905."

Bobby had his eyes on the figurines. Each was about one inch tall, and there were seemingly hundreds, all different.

"Yes? Let's put some players on the board. First we'll need a nobleman." Mr. D'Arcy fished in the pile of little people and found a proud fellow dressed in what looked like a smart military uniform. This he placed at the dacha. He said, "Our nobleman's name, as our little game begins, is Count Darlotsoff. He is twenty-three years old—quite young to be running an estate, quite young to be the father of three children. But such was the time and place. Now let us represent young Count Darlotsoff's family."

Mr. D'Arcy emptied the leather box into the North Sea and shuffled a handful of people up next to Sweden, indicating with a quavering hand that Bobby should pick out the players as they were named.

"Father, or the Old Count."

Bobby picked out a fat fellow in a jacket with medals and put him near Count Darlotsoff.

"Now Mother, or the Old Countess." Bobby picked an overweight little thing in a gown painted red.

"Uncanny choices," Mr. D'Arcy said. Soon a crowd of Count Darlotsoff's relatives had gathered at the dacha: his beautiful wife (a redhead, like Jenny Oswest), their three children, her two

sisters, their husbands, their six and eight children respectively, dozens of servants, two old aunts, several uncles and young cousins. The dacha was not a cottage at all but several mansions surrounded by a dozen fine barns and huge fields. "The trees there," Mr. D'Arcy said, "were as big as your elms here in Connecticut—very large trees they were, Russian maples, I should say, in rows on both sides of the lane. One looked down over long lawns to ... what shall we call them? To *terraced* ponds, and past these one glimpsed the homes of the peasants, the Old Count's *people*, as he called them. 'My *people*,' he would say, as he might say 'my *cattle*'—people, as it happened, who were being stirred up by thinkers from Saint Petersburg's universities."

Darlotsoff, whom Mr. D'Arcy called the Young Count, was one of the troublesome thinkers. He'd taken the new philosophies deeply to heart, finding them humane (at least in theory), moderate, and achievable. The serfs had been freed by the Edict of Emancipation far back in 1861, but freed only to economic slavery. The thinkers rose up with ideas: constitutional monarchy, social democracy, anarchism, nihilism, Bolshevism, Menshevism, land reform. The peasants began to covet the fields they worked.

Mr. D'Arcy gave Bobby a long look. "These are things we can talk about in the future, you and I, should you be inclined."

Bobby nodded noncommittally, shrugged, offered a polite smile.

Mr. D'Arcy fingered the figurine of the Old Count. "Him exactly," he said with a sigh. "But I'm afraid our game starts with the violent death of this man, and with the revision, I should say, of the Young Count's idealism."

The Old Count, it seemed, had cut off all but the most rudimentary food-stuffs to his peasants after the uprisings of 1905. He made hunting illegal, fenced off the ponds, saw trespassers and poachers hanged. Mr. D'Arcy pointed at various places on the map as if the very neighborhoods and shop fronts and carriages were pictured there. The Neva blacksmith, he said, Iosif Vladimirovich Alyoshin, became enraged when his dog was run over by

the mounted escorts of the Old Count's party, which had come into Saint Petersburg to meet with the hated Czar. Iosif, a reader and declaimer of poetry, educated and eloquent far beyond his station, ran after the carriages, caught up with them at the Neva River market, and demanded restitution.

"And what do you think the Old Count said to kindly Iosif, Robert? Did he say he was sorry? Did he send a servant down the next day with one of his *two hundred forty-six* dogs? No. The Old Count said this: 'Well, blacksmith, call on butcher Evanitsky! You and your brothers won't need your meat ration this month!'"

Iosif forgot himself and leaped up, pulling the Old Count out of his saddle and onto the cobblestones. And that might have been that, with Iosif hanged shortly thereafter, but the crowd surged in. They had no time for rope or guns, none of that; the peasants pulled up cobblestones and bashed noble brains, carried the bodies through the market square, and hung twelve on the

iron spikes of the fence around the old church. The priest burst out, aghast. Holding his hands up for quiet, he said, "You have proved to God that you are serfs always!" Soon he was hanging from the fence himself.

Mr. D'Arcy gazed at the Old Count's figurine a long time and said, "I'm glad you've picked him out—you've a marvelous eye. Let us bury him. We'll need a graveyard before we're through, I should say. Let us put our cemetery somewhere beautiful, somewhere we won't have to move it—here in Sweden, perhaps."

Bobby flew the remains of the Old Count to Sweden with a slow, solemn hand, and laid the fat little figurine on its back. In the ornate box of people he'd seen a priest, so he picked that figure out and flew it slowly to Sweden, visibly pleasing Mr. D'Arcy. Then he found eleven nobles, one at a time, and flew them to Sweden too.

Bobby said, "The Czar is like the king?"

"Bigger than a king! And his work of repression—repression is a holding down

by force, I should say—his work of repression in those years was bloody, inhuman. All of life became so. Murder poured from the palace. Through acts of kindness the Young Count prevented what he could on his own lands, but he saw Iosif to the gallows, saw half the peasant men of the county hanged as well, for merely having been in the square.

"Then history moved forward. You'll want to pick out some babies there, and more children, and some teens, and some young adults. Six in ten must be buried. Disease, largely, but common accidents, too. One will be the Young Count's second daughter, I'm afraid. Pick well, Robert, pick well!"

Bobby counted out a dozen babies and young children and youths and maidens, including one thin girl-woman with thick black hair who somehow seemed a princess, and flew them solemnly to the growing pile in Sweden. Mr. D'Arcy stood as if at a funeral, watching each flight to heaven closely, none of the usual adult hurrying or condescension when it came to make-believe.

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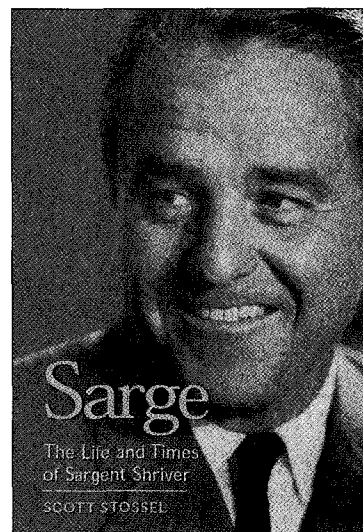
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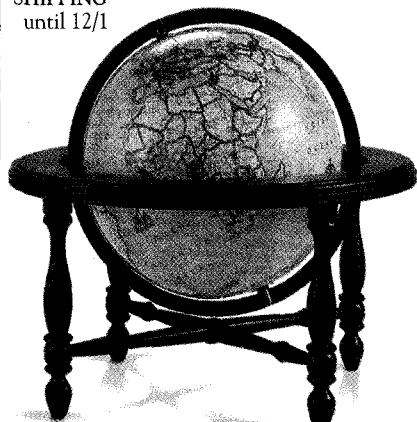
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When all the dead were safely buried, he said, "World War One broke out in 1914. The Young Count was less young now. His politics, which had formerly urged him toward an enlightened aristocracy, now urged him toward an unpopular parliamentarianism, in which a monarch might have some role, however ceremonial. I hope you are following some of this, Robert. Good, good—smart boy. We'll fill in the gaps presently, and correct any errors I might make. We have years to come in our friendship!"

Bobby grinned. He wasn't having trouble following Mr. D'Arcy. The map was in front of them, as were the babies—a little cough, a growing fever, and death. And the Czar, a king's king, flashing with jewels, robes purple—a cruel master!

Mr. D'Arcy smiled too, just so, and proceeded to give a carefully calibrated lecture in history: how the Czar had entered the Great War too enthusiastically; how most Russian factions had followed him; how the Bolsheviks had held back; how the new war had brought food shortages and yet more death; how, with the sudden proliferation of presses, all with points of view, the news had been all gossip; how, with the lack of food and dependable information, anarchy and insurrection had been rife.

"Now I must mention Rasputin. Have you heard of him, Robert? No? Then listen. Later you can read up and tell me what you think of him!" Rasputin, so Mr. D'Arcy said, was an opportunist, a satyr, a supposed monk, politely said to be "counseling" Empress Alexandra, who at his behest (so it was rumored) made secret deals with the Kaiser of Germany, further alienating the people and now the nobility as well. Saint Petersburg, called Petrograd during the war, was itself torn. In the countryside May and June of 1917 saw the peasants, already restive, rise up in waves of violent mutinies. Still the Young Count was sanguine, confident that his good relations with the peasants would protect him. Then, in October of 1917, in a paroxysm of antiwar fervor, Alexander Kerensky was overthrown by the Bolsheviks. After that the many rumbling factions would find focus and coalesce into at least four contentious movements: Whites, Reds,

Greens, Blacks. Armed bands from the cities would roam the land as brigands, in uniform or no, joined by disaffected peasants. Meanwhile, for a young nobleman like Count Darlotsoff there was no one left to trust. In desperation he packed up his townhouses and took his family to what he hoped was the safety of the dacha compound, where they spent an ominous Christmas: the Bolshevik coup had unleashed a wave of violence against landlords.

Bobby listened intently and watched the map, from which the story seemed to rise.

"One day, in the first weeks of 1918," said Mr. D'Arcy, "just when it had begun to seem that the unrest had spared the Young Count and his family, a band of forty came swaggering up the maple lane at Dacha Darlotsoff, straight to the grand doors. Hearing their shouts, the Young Count, though not feeling brave, stood up from his breakfast, pulled off his napkin, yanked on his jacket, and hefted his sword!" Alone, the Young Count stepped outside, barred the doors behind him, and made a stand. Soon his three uncles came running from their houses to support him, and then his brothers-in-law, his five teenage nephews, several young cousins, the children's French tutor, and the three manservants who hadn't run off: nineteen youths and men in all, standing against forty.

"The oldest was Uncle Pieter, my age now: eighty-one. The youngest was Cousin Victor (who had been named for Victor Hugo), your age, at a guess: he was twelve." The leader of the renegades spoke: "We come in peace." He was tall, with roughly cut leather pants, and for a uniform nothing but the vestiges of an officer's jacket, on its breast a badge from neighbor Simeonov's chest. The Young Count's heart pounded. But he was master of the estate, and had established himself as generous and fair. He stood tall in his riding boots and said, "If you come in peace, then go in peace"—a rather nice line, he thought. All the brigands and all the dacha's men stood frozen, till suddenly the great doors flew open, and out raced the Youngest Count, a boy nicknamed Chimp, a baby of five years, still in short pants and curls, shouting, "Turks! Huns! I kill you!" He waved



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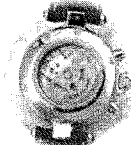
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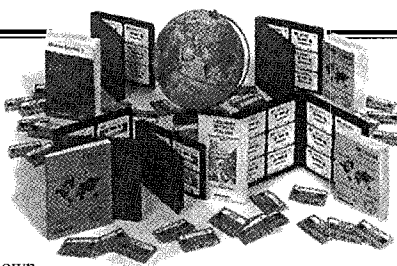
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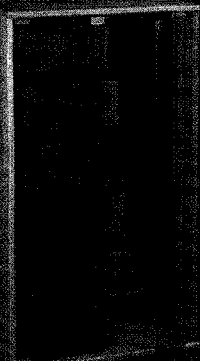
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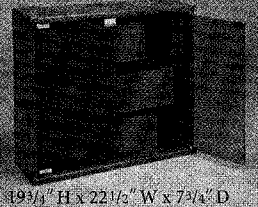
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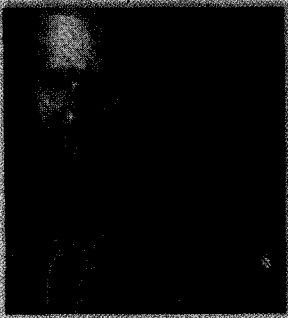
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his wooden sword and charged with it on an imaginary steed through the men of his family and into the press of soldiers. And just when one would expect laughter and relief in normal times among normal men, a brigand in the third or fourth rank of men—that's how deep the brave Youngest Count had penetrated—picked the boy up, flung him in the air, caught him by the feet, and dashed his brains out on the stone stairs of the main dwelling. From the criminal's mates there were cries of disgust, but never mind—the Young Count struck their leader down with his sword, a perfect thrust through the neck, and the old uncles faced the next tier, slashing and killing, but were overwhelmed by the advancing remains of the forty and were murdered one at a time, dying beheaded, disemboweled, gushing blood, as the Young Count and the brave young nephews backed up to the great doors. From above came sudden shots—the Young Countess and the Old Countess, as it turned out, firing the sophisticated hunting rifles of Dacha Darlotsoff, round after round into the band of criminals. And this saved the day: the brigands had only three or four old muskets, slow to load. By the time the brigands turned and ran, twenty or more of them were dead on the stairs, piled on Chimp's tiny body, and on the bodies of the uncles, and the brothers-in-law, and Feodor, the favorite nephew, fourteen years of age, and two boy cousins, nicknamed Marcel and Louis, and on the cook, the tutor, and the stableboy, too, the loyal stableboy, who'd come up from the village that morning.

Mr. D'Arcy took a long breath, stood erect, and puffed his cheeks, blowing out a series of sighs and looking over the length of the map as if he were staring out across the great expanse of Russia herself. Bobby flew first the broken body of Chimp to Sweden; then those of the three old uncles, one at a time, full ceremony each; and then each of the others. He huddled the remaining family—mostly women and children—behind the Young Count, pictured the great wooden dacha doors closing behind them, imagined the shouts, the tears, the triumph of the women upstairs muted instantly by the tragedy they'd been unable to ward off and had only curtailed.

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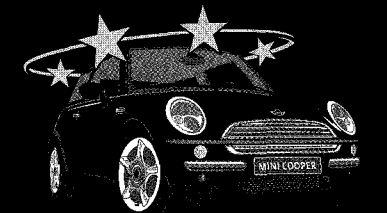
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Mr. D'Arcy lowered his voice and continued. That evening, only two hours later, after barely enough time to drag in the dead family members, a score of brigand bodies still splayed out on the steps, the remains of the motley band returned with a horde of disgruntled peasants from beyond the ponds. Sixty men hid behind the piled bodies and then stormed the great doors. The Young Count and his nephews and nieces and daughters, armed one and all with elegant and thoroughly modern hunting rifles but little skill, fired from the downstairs windows out among the brigands, killing many and wounding many more. "Even my children fought," Mr. D'Arcy cried, "made murderers by those they killed!"

Upstairs at the dacha the Young Count's pretty wife loaded rifles for the Old Countess, who was a masterly shot, picking off brigands like so many pheasants in the stubble of rye. The brigands and their peasant conscripts were no better armed than earlier, and died in growing heaps; but a handful managed to set the dacha doors on fire, filling the house with smoke. Then four of the beasts climbed the stones to the second story, surprising the Old Countess, who was still firing on their fellows. They overwhelmed her and tossed her bodily from the high balcony. She broke on the ground below, in sight of her son, died without a sound while the four brigands handed down their prize: the Young Countess. One could not shoot for fear of hitting her. One could not give chase, not with six young women and girls unprotected in the house.

"The Young Count didn't know it at the time, of course, but this was the end of the Russia he had loved. His darling wife had been carried off, his mother defenestrated! His horses were gone. His barns were afire. The tutor, the cook, the stableboy, all dead. As for men, only the gardener's assistant, a German youth the Young Count had never been fond of, was still alive."

Mr. D'Arcy fell into a deep silence, while Bobby flew the dead to Sweden—first the Old Countess in her plumpness, then the tutor, the cook, and the stableboy, one by one. The Young Countess he held in his hand a minute; she'd only



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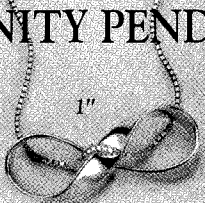
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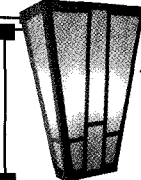
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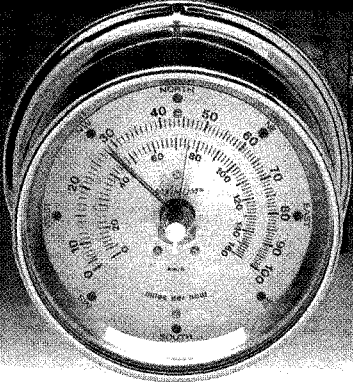
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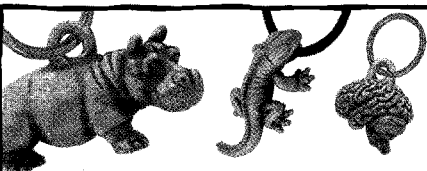
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been carried off, perhaps to be rescued. The figurine he'd picked was so beautiful, the most beautiful of them all, with flowing red hair and a red-and-silver gown. Mr. D'Arcy gazed at her too, and at length shook his head very slightly. "She mustn't have lived long at their hands," he said.

To Sweden with her! Around Petrograd, Bobby could see rivers of blood, smoke pouring from dachas, flames enveloping the finest houses in town, women carried off, gentle milk cows slaughtered by starving roamers!

Mr. D'Arcy said, "Now—tell me, Robert." He had begun to pronounce Bobby's formal name just the way the part-time French teacher at school did: *Ro-bear*. His eyes were closed. "If you are the Young Count, what do you do next? Remember—you have two living daughters and three nieces, aged twenty down to seven, your single surviving sister-in-law, who is called Monique, and a brave if stubborn German gardener left. What is your course of action?"

Bobby looked at the figurines. What Mr. D'Arcy had said, his eyes closed, was exactly true: the Young Count was surrounded by seven, only one of them a man. Bobby didn't know what to do. His heart began to beat in his thin chest, all of him safe in this rich man's map room except his imagination. The first thought that came to his careful head was of heroics: "The gardener and I go to rescue the Young Countess! The women ... hide? The women and girls hide in the tornado shelter!" This from *The Wizard of Oz*.

Mr. D'Arcy smiled briefly at that suggestion and said, "The German gardener is but seventeen, I should say! And the house, remember, is smoking at the doors. These girls—all very lovely, some of them small children, two of them your daughters! And Monique crying and moaning, she's lost her head—no help there. Do you see? The gardener is a hulk: quiet, impassive."

Bobby blurted out, "We have to gather everyone and leave!"

Mr. D'Arcy snapped back, "Just leave the dacha, with all its furnishings, all your wealth, all your beloved objects, papers, portraits, pets?"

Bobby replied, "But the *brigands* will be back!"

Mr. D'Arcy, almost in tears, said, "Leave the dacha and go ... where? Where will they not be intercepted? Where should their flight take them?"

"The forest!"

"Exactly—the forest. This was the Young Count's first thought too." Mr. D'Arcy closed his eyes and leaned back in his chair, resting a moment before plunging on. He told of the fires in the forest, the brigands lurking there, no escape route obvious.

Bobby smelled the smoke, saw all the blood, saw the old uncles lying dead on the couches of the grand drawing room. He said, "We'd better get going! Let's move!" He looked at the crackled old map and saw a stream named Ota just where the dacha was marked in Mr. D'Arcy's own ink. He said, "To the stream? Is there a canoe?"

"Well thought, Robert. Except that, of course, the River Ota is quite frozen."

"A sled?" Bobby cried.

Yes, a sled. The Young Count and his daughter Petra (the only girl capable), along with the dour gardener, loaded one of the dacha's elegant sleighs with food and firearms and family papers as fast as they could. Then they escorted a trembling Monique and the younger girls down to the ice, none too soon: a mob in the hundreds approached, bearing torches.

Bobby bit his nails and said, "We have to *hurry*!"

"Hurry, Robert, yes. The girls *tumbled* into the sleigh. Monique we had to *push*. And Dort and I acted as horses. We took up the trace bars and pulled the sleigh out onto the Ota."

"Safe," Bobby said. "Safe!"

"Hardly," Mr. D'Arcy said blackly.

"No homework tonight?" Bobby's father said at dinner.

Bobby, lost in thought, had to scramble to keep his cover. "Report," he said.

"Report?" his mom said.

"On the, um, Russian Revolution."

"Oh, I know a thing or two about that," Bobby's father said. "Romanovs. Rasputin. The Czar and Czarina and Czarlings eating too much caviar! It all leads them right down into World War One."

"Yes," Bobby said. "But the worst

of it comes well after World War One begins!”

His father and mother looked at him for a long time, as proud as pizza pie. Their faces said it all: Bobby was finally taking an interest.

His dad said, “Let’s get out the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* after supper!”

Bobby ran into the woods and took the commando route, even crawling to the front door of Harbinger Hall—he was a long-lost nephew, a brave boy bringing news of the River Ota. At the great doors of Mr. D’Arcy’s stone house he didn’t even have to knock: Hilyard was right there. “Master Robert,” he said.

“Hi,” Bobby said.

“Mr. D’Arcy will be down from his bath in a moment. You are to wait in his study.”

The day before, Bobby had had to ask Mr. D’Arcy to stop the game: it was school-bus time. And Bobby had worried about this in the night, feeling that he might have offended the old man.

He stood in the study not touching anything (Hilyard had said he had best not), looking closely at the grand bookshelf, trying without luck to pick out the secret door. Soon Mr. D’Arcy shuffled in, wearing pajama pants, fleece slippers, and a silk smoking jacket like one the Young Count himself might have worn.

“Good morning, Robert!” *Ro-bear*. “I see your smile is with you! You are ready for more of my dismal story—more of our game, I should say.”

“Yip.”

“But first, Hilyard has made me realize that there are some questions to ask of you. Are you Robert Mullendore?”

“Yip.”

“And your mum, is she the Ann Mullendore who volunteers at the Nature Center?”

“Yip: Ann.”

“So the redoubtable Hilyard did recognize you, I should say. The third question is about your studies. I’d made the rather hasty assumption that this for you was a holiday week of some

nature. Hilyard says no. So why are you not in school?”

Seven lies went through Bobby’s head, but the truth bobbed up in the light of Mr. D’Arcy’s clear eyes upon him: “I am skipping.”

“Skipping! I believe I know what that means! Dort says he saw you one morning two weeks ago, racing through the woods, and then again last week, perhaps twice, and this week, of course, leading up to his making your acquaintance.”

So Bobby told the whole story of his desertion, his defection, his despair. Mr. D’Arcy didn’t seem angry so much as amused, and listened carefully. “Well, never mind. Later we’ll ask Hilyard to make a couple of phone calls on your behalf.”

Bobby’s heart sank. “Um, who’s he gonna call?”

“On your behalf, my boy. No more to say. Not to worry, either. Hilyard has a very delicate touch. But enough of that. We have a game to attend to.”

In the map room Mr. D’Arcy flicked on the lights one by one. Bobby felt

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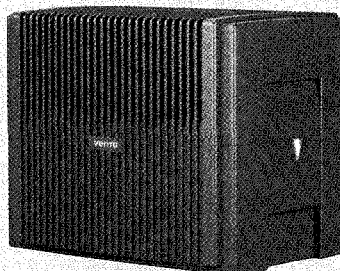
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glum until he was captured by the map again. All was as it had been left. The dead were in Sweden, lots of them. The living were arranged in their sleigh—a matchbox that Bobby had rigged with four paper-clip runners—upon the ice of the Ota. Mr. D'Arcy named all the figures in the sleigh: Monique, Petra, the other girls. The Young Count stood before the sleigh with the German gardener, Dort. Bobby picked up this figurine and looked at it hard: peasant garb, greenish trousers, a yellow shirt showing a tear, a rake and a hoe over its shoulder. The figure was larger than any of the others, especially its hands. Bobby said, "Can I ask you something?"

"You may, yes, ask anything, as you wish."

"Is Dort the same Dort?"

"And I may answer or not, as I wish!" Mr. D'Arcy said. He was certainly more cheerful today. "For now let us just say that he is a young, silent, rather irritating German gardener's assistant, with the one noble trait of loyalty. He is strong—he's nearly a horse himself, which the Young Count is by no means. The Ota has overflowed its own ice after a recent thaw and has frozen anew, slick and hard and black, I should say. Can you see it?" And Mr. D'Arcy resumed the story.

The sleigh sang along on the most modern polished-steel runners. The problem was in controlling its speed; the two man-horses slipped and slid, holding the trace bars. The Young Count skidded in his riding boots, slithered at Dort's steadier side, and had to keep shushing the girls behind them, who whimpered. They passed below the Petrokov summer palace, where flames silhouetted brigands passing furniture out the windows. A shout went up—they'd been seen!—and dozens of men came crashing down through the crusted snow on the great lawn. But Dort was a horse and pulled the whole band along the ice at a sensational clip. The Young Count finally gave up trying to help and hoisted himself onto the broadboard and then into the sleigh among the panicked girls. He looked back to see a phalanx of scruffy, slipping soldiers giving chase but los-

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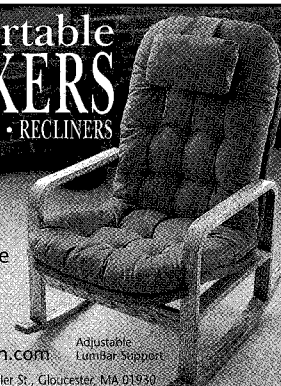
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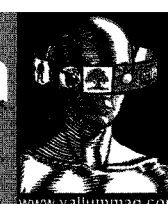
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ing ground. No comfort there: the mill-dam was ahead.

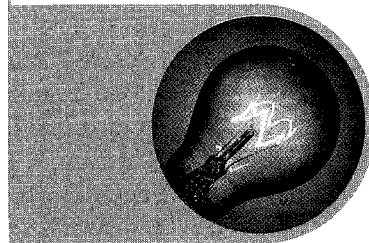
The Young Count hugged and kissed each girl and told her he loved her, kissed his daughters passionately as if he would never see them again, and then took up arms. Petra loaded and handed him hunting rifles one by one. The count picked off six soldiers of a growing number, while all the time Dort pulled and the sleigh skittered. At the dam the desperate family tumbled out—all but Monique, who was frozen with fear. The Young Count, the girls, and Dort, thus forced to leave her, stomped through the snow to the mill buildings, where they raced through the miller's abandoned house, down the stairs, and back outside, onto the ice below the dam, all of them falling and sprawling, the Young Count thinking to reach the far bank and the old sawmill, where they could hide and fight. Just then over the dam came the sleigh, doubtless pushed by the soldiers, Monique riding it down silently. She was thrown out on impact and landed grotesquely broken on the current-weakened ice, which also broke, dumping the sleigh and then the woman into the water.

Dort, the Young Count, the girls, all held hands in a line, Dort and the Count pulling the rest behind. Petra held the one rifle they had salvaged. By now, of course, the soldier-brigands would have the other weapons. Near the sawmill shore, near what might have been safety, the ice simply ended in a deep flow of river water from the millrace. And here came the soldiers, twenty or more men and boys, firing the dacha's hunting rifles. Marta, the Count's younger daughter, shrieked and fell dead on the ice. Petra, the older, fired back, hitting no one. The soldiers came forward in a crowd, slipping in their tall boots on the ice. Suddenly the sheen beneath them gave way. One brigand head bobbed and then went under the ice; many brigand arms flailed; many men simply sank under the weight of their stolen clothes and full pockets. Two or three climbed out on Miller Gurevitch's garden banks—where, Mr. D'Arcy said, "one can only hope they froze."

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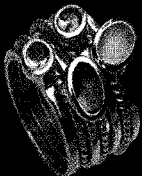
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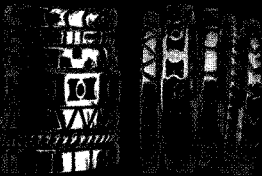
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All this left the family and the gardener on a huge pan of ice that turned slowly as if it would reach the shore and save those still alive but then abruptly stopped, heaved itself up on something submerged, rose on the slow current, and broke, dumping everyone. Petra and Dort managed to swim out and help the Young Count to shore and safety, but all the others were lost. The survivors' garments grew stiff with ice. The Count was nearly out of his mind, ready to leap into the Ota and join the dead. Dort had the inspiration to burn the sawmill building, easily done with the vanished sawyer's flint and steel. Twenty minutes and the fire was ferocious, half an hour and the little band's clothes were dry.

Bobby studied the figures of the girls. He flew Monique to Sweden first and laid her in line, squashing the matchbox sleigh with a slow fist. He thought hard in the silence, and then flew the matchbox to Sweden too. He could do that much. Then he flew Marta, shot, and the drowned girls one at a time, till all the girls but Petra were in Sweden. Mr. D'Arcy watched solemnly. He said, "Saved from rape by death."

The map room was silent except for the sound of a fan whirring somewhere in the walls. Abruptly Mr. D'Arcy continued: The remaining threesome walked southward, avoiding towns, stealing food, always marching, growing wild, filthy, starved thin as rats. The Young Count's plan was to cross the German lines—the Kaiser was more an ally than not, he thought—and make their way, perhaps as refugees or even as prisoners of war, first to Germany and then, God willing, "La France."

At that someone knocked very softly, and the hidden door rolled open on its secret, silent ball bearings. "You will take luncheon here?" Hilyard said.

"Yes, quite, why not?" Mr. D'Arcy said, in an entirely different voice.

The butler set up a card table, chairs, a tablecloth. Soon he was back with a tureen of bright-red soup, a small loaf of coarse bread, and strips of liver on fine plates. Then came a salad of dark greens, a plate of cheeses, and finally chocolates. Bobby ate with his best manners, Mr. D'Arcy delicately. They didn't talk until Hilyard came to collect the plates.

To him Mr. D'Arcy said, "You've made some phone calls?"

The butler said, "Indeed, sir. I found everyone most agreeable, once a certain level of, let us say, *astonishment* wore off." Across Hilyard's face crept the first smile that Bobby had seen upon it.

A smile spread upon Mr. D'Arcy's face as well. He said, "And we will have Saturdays?"

"Saturdays, sir, quite so, though it took some *persuasion*." Those smiles. Both men looked at Bobby.

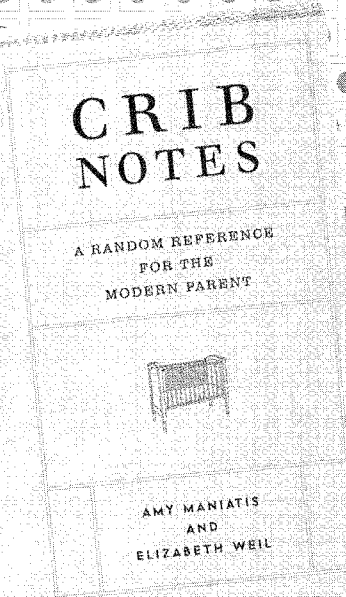
"What?" the boy said. He knew the calls had been about him.

Mr. D'Arcy said, "You mustn't shirk school, my boy. And from here forward you shan't. I believe Hilyard has interceded on your behalf; you won't be punished, we think, except by having to come here Saturdays through the school year for tutoring—to, um, I should say, to make up for lost school." And that was that.

After lunch the band—the Young Count, Petra, and Dort—traveled slowly, finding abandoned buildings to sleep in, freezing by night, afraid to light fires, lingering where they found safety and warmth and food, and then carrying on, making their way south into spring, which was blessedly warm that year. Mr. D'Arcy leaned into his story in the golden lamplight, a hand on the map as Bobby moved the last three figures southward to the banks of a great painted river. Dort crossed first, shouting in German so as to be welcomed. The soldiers he met allowed him to swim back. But he'd read their faces, and he thought that he and the Young Count would be shot for the girl. So they walked several leagues along the river until they found a crossing on rocks under the remains of a bridge. A Russian peasant came to them and asked for food. This was the River Dnieper, he said. He took them to an abandoned dredging barge he'd found. The four wanderers launched that poor vessel and floated south for three weeks, unchallenged. At Kiev they traded the dredging equipment to a docksmen for bags of beans and Chinese rice, and then floated on. Kiev was in German hands; Dort barked greetings to soldiers and sailors. And so the grieving band con-

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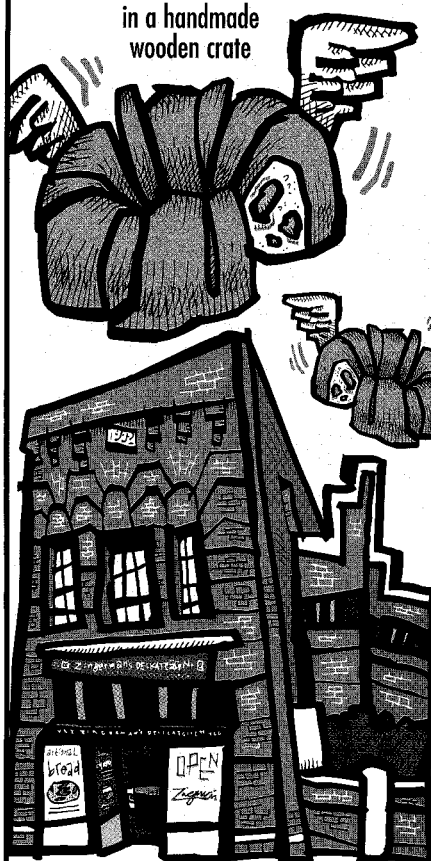
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tinued, all the way to Zaporozhye, where the peasant took off on his own.

In Zaporozhye—high summer—life seemed as it had always. The band found an estate the Young Count knew, belonging to a friend of his father's. It was untouched, its master gone, a very old man in charge, a blind great-uncle. He welcomed them and shared the estate's abundant stores and plush beds. This, Mr. D'Arcy said, was the worst period the Young Count had ever encountered or would ever encounter in his life: the succor and the solace made him comfortable, and in comfort every horror welled up: his wife dead, the members of his family, each a sorrow too much to bear, all dead. He would sleep hard, awake happy, and then remember—and spend the waking day in tears. Dort was the same. Petra was young, and healed more quickly.

"You said 'we,'" Bobby said. "You keep saying 'we.'"

"Do I?" Mr. D'Arcy said. He thought a moment, trying to hear himself, and said, "If so, I apologize. It is not I but a younger man I speak of, the Young Count Darlotsoff."

The old blind man of the manor came to the Young Count in front of the fire one midnight, walking in his sleep ("A true Tiresias," Mr. D'Arcy said), and chanted, "Listen, noble friend, listen to me. You will be well. You will find freedom by way of water. You will prosper in your new home. You will never forget, but you will come to accept. You will be wealthy again, in a new palace. You will never again marry. You will have no more children. Until one day a boy will come. You will tell him what you have suffered, and even in his innocence he will understand, and what you tell him will change him forever, and you will have an heir in him. You will live long, very, very long. You, who have lost so much, will gain more back. And the boy you befriend will change the world in his turn." The Young Count found surcease in the old man's words, found the will to live on.

The Germans couldn't hold Kiev, and in retreat they took the manor, bunking there and preparing for what, as it turned out, would be their doom. The intrepid three were once again cast

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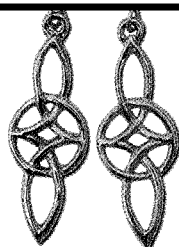
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loose, heading south. They reached the Crimea, spent what seemed a kind of mourning vacation in Sebastopol, and then went to Yalta, a resort city where White Army thugs handed out random death. Dort found work on the docks lifting; he was accosted constantly, beaten twice for his silence, accused of being a Red, or a German, or a criminal. The Young Count could get no work; he was jeered at and slapped for his accent by anyone who felt the urge, but he made rounds of the meanest back streets for scraps of food, for useful tin cans. Petra dressed as a smaller child, an urchin, and used her fine manners to collect day-old bread, vegetables gone by, the odd soupbone. In fact, the three ate relatively well. They lived under a bridge briefly, and then on the littered beach. Dort kept them in vodka.

One chilly afternoon, as autumn approached, the Young Count discovered a day sailboat from one of the empty resorts, small open cockpit, hull perhaps sixteen feet in length, partially rotted sails. It had been pulled into the reeds by vandals and forgotten. If one stayed out of sight of the piers (where White Army hooligans lined up young men and shot them just to watch them fall into the sea, just to watch the sea turn red), if one slipped in at night, one might supply such a boat with food and water, might steal it unseen. Terror prevented immediate fulfillment of the plan, however—even a hobo's beach was more comfort than that little boat. Still, over the course of the subsequent weeks they hid a quarter share of their food under the boat's small foredeck, among moldy life vests. On the penultimate night Dort took ill—vomiting, shitting, coughing.

"Surely I can say 'shitting,' yes? You grin! American boy!"

The next morning the Young Count fell ill too. That evening Petra succumbed. Dort became healthy enough to look after her, and then the Young Count came around too. But brave Petra grew worse and worse, and there on the beach, under the salvaged awning of a pleasure yacht, she died.

Mr. D'Arcy cried silently for a long while. Bobby thought that he, too, could cry but would not. He flew Petra to Sweden, feeling that the others

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greeted her there, that at least she had company there, family—her sisters, her mother, her grandparents. Who did the Young Count have? No one but Dort, the irritating gardener.

At length Mr. D'Arcy continued. The Young Count grew determined. Death at sea seemed a blessing. Even to be shot would be heaven-sent. The night after they buried Petra in Black Sea sand, "for the tides to find," he and Dort dragged the abandoned boat from the reeds, climbed in, and hand paddled in a calm sea, under a moonless sky, till they were purely exhausted. Then they paddled more. Dawn and a breeze came up, good fortune, since they could still be seen from shore. The breeze turned to wind, and then to a storm—more good fortune mixed with more bad. The boat was tossed and raced southward, but no other vessels were about, no one to spot them. The Young Count had some aristocrat's sailing lessons behind him, and he kept the little boat before the cold north wind for a full day, cruising ever south. In the night, while Dort slept, the Young Count held the tiller, groaning and weeping, his tears mingling with the heavy rain, the relentless spray. At daybreak came landfall.

"This was *Turkiye*, Robert, and freedom. And the Young Count did live on, as his Tiresias said he would." In Berlin some months later, posing as French, the Young Count took a new name. Protected by Dort's knowledge of the city, he worked as a waiter until he could get to Paris, well after the war. There family money awaited in various old-line accounts, so very much money that he found no obstacles to a voyage to New York, where he became thoroughly American in a matter of months, hoping to shed his horror. But horror ever returned, returned unbidden at every sweet moment, even as he rose to prominence and eventually reigned in the international banking business. In time the Young Count—not so young anymore—found his New World palace, as had been predicted. And in a moment of weakness, of nostalgia, of irrational love and longing for the past, he sent for Dort, who willingly became his master gardener, as stupid and irritating as always,

as loyal as always, the only one who knew the Young Count's story first to last.

Bobby tore up Dogwood Lane, pulling his sleigh full of doomed daughters, skittered on the ice that was Wahackme Road, raced into his own road, all but skated along the tar and breathlessly home. Mr. D'Arcy wouldn't say a word more about the phone calls Hilyard had made but only invited Bobby back for Saturdays—which invitation he would honor nearly every Saturday of Bobby's youth and young manhood: lessons on maps, lessons on a polished-brass microscope, lessons in a half dozen languages, lessons in business, ethics, economics, in the theory of relativity, lessons in math and mythology, lessons in what the old man called "charm." Robert grew intellectually far past his peers, but he loved them and was loved by them and attended school in any case. With Mr. D'Arcy's help he was welcomed at Harvard College with every blandishment the admissions team could muster. With the move to Cambridge his Saturdays with the ancient man ended, but never the game. He visited during Christmas breaks and summers, and took many road trips with friends to meet the master, sometimes bringing particular girlfriends. Mr. D'Arcy approved only of a certain redhead named Marilyn, whom, much later, Robert would marry. And though Mr. D'Arcy passed away on a winter's day, expiring quietly alone at his desk, the Young Count was always with Robert. He gave him his many powers, gave him Dort, too, and Hilyard, and a fortune in bonds and real estate and numbered accounts across the great blue globe. Robert B. Mullen-dore would change the world, all right.

He was late, and ran, slowing only when he saw his parents standing at the end of the driveway waiting for him, Dad home early from work, tall and concerned, Mom in her apron, head somberly cocked, Mrs. Applegate looming just behind them, her formidable arms crossed over her chest. ▀

Bill Roorbach holds the Jenks Chair in Contemporary American Letters at the College of the Holy Cross. His newest book is Temple Stream, to be published in the spring.

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The eight people profiled here are winners of Service to America Medals conferred jointly by the magazines of Atlantic Media Co. and the Partnership for Public Service, a nonprofit organization dedicated to revitalizing the federal workforce. The SAM program, now in its third year, aims to interest more Americans in working for Uncle Sam by telling about the careers and achievements of people like this year's winners. This supplement is published in each of our magazines—*The Atlantic Monthly*, *Government Executive*, and *National Journal*—reaching more than 500,000 readers directly. Many more people will learn about these stories in local and national news coverage.

Here, at a glance, are the 2004 Service to America Medals winners:

Robert Clifford, of the FBI, who headed an investigation in Athens that broke up one of Europe's most notorious and elusive terrorist groups.

Prudence Bushnell, a career foreign service officer who was ambassador to Kenya in 1998 when terrorists blew up the U.S. embassy in Nairobi, killing more than 200 people. She led the recovery there. A few years earlier, hers was a lonely voice in calling for U.S. action to stem the horrific ethnic genocide in Rwanda.

Nicole Nelson-Jean, a twenty-eight-year-old Tokyo-based Energy Department employee, who led a delegation to the Arctic Circle to convince the Russians that they needed better security for their nuclear materials and weapons.

Brad Gair, of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, who oversaw the federal government's recovery efforts in New York in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Peter Darling, a Customs special agent whose work shut down a Chicago-based conspiracy to use infants as cover to smuggle drugs disguised as baby formula into the United States and Europe.

Stephen Browning, of the Army Corps of Engineers, who played an important role in U.S. efforts to help Iraq rebuild electrical infrastructure and established several government ministries.

Deborah Jin, a physicist with the National Institute of Standards and Technology who created a form of matter that potentially could unlock the key to superconductivity.

Eileen Harrington, whose team at the Federal Trade Commission initiated the federal Do Not Call Registry, blocking unwanted telemarketing calls for millions of Americans.

Timothy B. Clark
Editor, *Government Executive*



Service to
America
Medal



Service to
America
Medals

The Awards

The Service to America program honors career achievements in the federal service. Eight winners, profiled in the pages that follow, were selected from a group of twenty-eight finalists by a panel of national leaders. Finalists and winners were chosen from among 496 nominees in seven categories. One was designated as Federal Employee of the Year.

Finalists

Career Achievement

- **Marsha Henderson**, director of health programs, Office of Women's Health, Food and Drug Administration, Washington, D.C.
- **Han K. Kang**, director of the War-Related Illness and Injury Studies Center, Veterans Affairs Department, Washington, D.C.
- **David A. King**, director, Marshall Space Flight Center, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Huntsville, Alabama.
- **Elizabeth Martin**, senior scientist and director, Night Vision Program, Air Force Research Laboratory, Mesa, Arizona.

Call to Service

- **John Butler**, research chemist, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, Maryland.
- **Leopoldo Miranda-Castro**, biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arlington, Virginia.
- **Ranjeet Singh**, program analyst, Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, Kabul, Afghanistan.

Homeland Security

- **Jose Melendez-Perez**, Customs and Border Protection officer, Homeland Security Department, Orlando, Florida.
- **Michael Washington**, industrial engineer/health scientist, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, Georgia.

Justice and Law Enforcement

- **Michele L. Culp**, U.S. postal inspector/program manager, U.S. Postal Service, Washington, D.C.

- **Samuel Holland**, assistant inspector general for investigations, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, Washington, D.C.
- **Anna Moretto and team**, supervisory attorney, Education Department, New York Office for Civil Rights.

National Security and International Affairs

- **George Aldaya**, director, Kansas City Commodity Office, Farm Service Agency, Kansas City, Missouri.
- **Keith Brown**, deputy assistant administrator, Bureau for Africa, U.S. Agency for International Development, Washington, D.C.

Science and Environment

- **Amy Alving**, director, Special Projects Office, Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, Arlington, Virginia.
- **Diane Drigot**, senior natural resources management specialist, U.S. Marine Corps, Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii.
- **William H. Gerstenmaier**, program manager, International Space Station, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Houston, Texas.

Social Services

- **Thomas Cacciarelli**, chief of transplant surgery, Pittsburgh Healthcare System, Veterans Affairs Department.
- **Joseph A. Foster**, senior attorney, Public Health Division, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, Georgia.
- **Margaret J. Washnitzer**, director of state assistance, Office of Community Services, Administration for Children and Families, Washington, D.C.

2004 Selection Committee

A select group of prominent national leaders has been charged with identifying the Service to America Medals honorees.

Jodie Allen

Managing Editor, U.S. News & World Report

Roy Bostock

Chairman, Partnership for a Drug-Free America

Albert Carnesale

Chancellor, University of California, Los Angeles

Timothy B. Clark

Editor and President, Government Executive

Thad Cochran

U.S. Senate

William Cohen

Chairman and CEO, The Cohen Group

Tom Daschle

Democratic Leader, U.S. Senate

Dr. Antonio Flores

President, Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities

Kay Coles James

Director, Office of Personnel Management

Colleen M. Kelley

National President, National Treasury Employees Union

Carol Mendelsohn

Executive Producer, CSI

Leon E. Panetta

Director, Panetta Institute of Public Policy

Alma Powell

Co-Chair, America's Promise—The Alliance for Youth

Rebecca W. Rimel

President and CEO, The Pew Charitable Trusts

John Sexton

President, New York University

Max Stier

President and CEO, Partnership for Public Service

For information on the awards and the stipends that accompany them, and to download a nomination form, go to www.govexec.com and click on Events & Awards.

This supplement was produced by the staff of Government Executive magazine, a publication of Atlantic Media Co.



50 STARS, 13 STRIPES, AND 1 YOU.

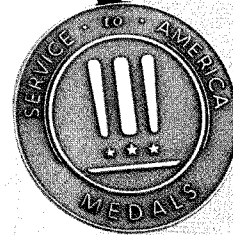
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Federal Employee of the Year



"Success Begets Success"

FBI agent Robert Clifford worked methodically to help dismantle a Greek terrorist organization

By Katherine McIntire Peters

When Richard Welch, the CIA's station chief in Athens, was assassinated in 1975, few had ever heard of the terrorist organization, called 17 November, that claimed responsibility. Even fewer would have

believed it would take the persistent efforts of a tireless FBI agent to help dismantle the group nearly three decades later.

Robert Clifford was in high school when Welch was assassinated. Clifford was commissioned in the Navy in 1981, the peak of the Cold War. He left the service in 1988 and the following year joined the FBI, embarking on a career in counterterrorism that would take him around the globe. But it was his work in North Carolina in the late 1990s that became his ticket to Greece. There Clifford supervised a counterterrorism team that penetrated a Lebanese Hezbollah cell that was trafficking in tobacco in a scheme to fund terrorist operations in the Middle East.

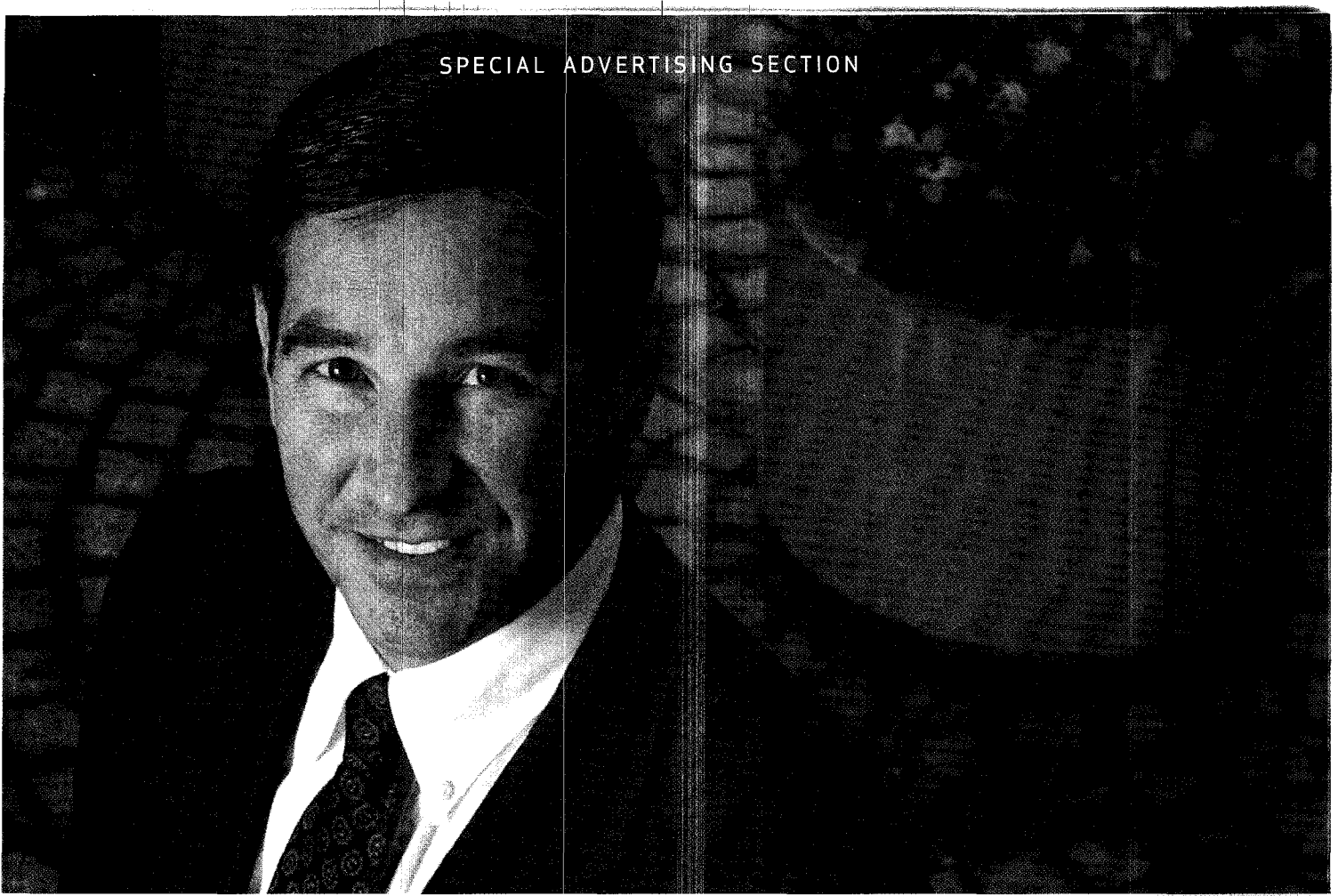
FBI officials in Washington on June 2, 2000, asked Clifford if he would consider taking the job of U.S. legal attaché to Greece after he wrapped up the Hezbollah case in North Carolina. They specifically wanted him to resurrect the case against 17 November and improve a faltering relationship with Greek legal authorities. Clifford was still selling the idea to his wife and

young children six days later when 17 November members assassinated Brigadier Stephen Saunders, the British defense attaché in Athens.

"You can imagine I had some explaining to do," he says. Whatever his family's trepidations were, they moved to Athens that fall and Clifford launched into the challenge of unraveling the workings of a group about which very little was known. By then, 17 November had claimed responsibility for dozens of bombings and assassinations. The organization had killed five U.S. embassy employees and wounded dozens more Americans in Greece. The Marxist organization blamed the United States for supporting the military junta that came to power in Greece in 1967 and collapsed seven years later.

"For close to twenty-five years, 17 November was killing Americans without ever having a single member identified," Clifford says. "There were several attempts between the United States government and the government of Greece to follow through on these investigative leads, but there was really no comprehensive, focused, intelligence-driven effort to do this."

One of the first things Clifford did was to work with Greek law enforcement officials to establish a strong training program in forensics, crime-scene management, and developing lines of questioning. He also helped



Greek officials craft laws that would give the government expanded authority for terrorism investigations. After democracy was restored following the junta in 1974, the Greek police services had largely been stripped of power.

Clifford reviewed the entire case file, from the initial assassination of Welch in 1975 to the most recent assassination of Saunders in 2000. It was a large file: the Center for Defense Information reports that 17 November was believed to have been responsible for more than 100 attacks and twenty-three fatalities during that period. "I defined what leads had been pursued and what leads had not been pursued, and provided a complete review of what evidence could be examined again. I was trying to bring this all together and provide a strong plan to start pursuing these terrorists," Clifford says.

He worked closely with his British counterparts, some of whom he had collaborated with on previous terrorism investiga-

tions. At the same time, public ambivalence in Greece toward 17 November began to change, after Heather Saunders, the widow of the assassinated British defense attaché, spoke publicly about her anguish and created a victims' lobbying group.

"For close to twenty-five years, 17 November was killing Americans without ever having a single member identified. There were several attempts between the United States and Greece to follow through on investigative leads, but there was really no comprehensive, focused, intelligence-driven effort."

—Robert Clifford

A break in the case came in June 2002, when a member of 17 November accidentally detonated a bomb he was setting. "These bombings happen all the time in Greece," says Clifford. But this time, police discovered a .38-caliber revolver on the bomber and ran a ballistics check on it, "a logical

step but something that is not always done here," Clifford says. It turned out that the revolver was forensically linked to slugs removed from past victims of 17 November.

One thing led to another. Safe houses were discovered. Identifications were made.

Greek authorities established a toll-free number for people to call with information. "Success begets success. It all started coming together," Clifford says. Within months, nineteen members of 17 November had been arrested, and by December 2003, fifteen of those cases had been successfully prosecuted. U.S. Ambassador to Greece Thomas Miller credits Clifford's extraordinary leader-

ship and productive relationships with Greek authorities in breaking 17 November after twenty-five years of dead ends in the case.

"Bob's efforts will be remembered for years to come," says Gary Bald, the FBI's assistant director for counterterrorism.



Career Achievement

Courage in Crisis

First genocide, then terrorism.

Prudence Bushnell has learned to manage under fire

By Shane Harris

“Pru, it’s Rwanda on the phone!”

Prudence Bushnell, the State Department’s deputy assistant secretary for African affairs, was expecting the call, but not on a Saturday afternoon while

having a drink in her friend’s kitchen.

They were rewarding themselves after a walk when Bushnell heard the shout from her friend’s teenage son. Paul Kagame, the commander of the Rwandan Patriotic Front rebel group, wanted to discuss the government’s genocide campaign against his countrymen.

Organized bands of ethnic Hutus were systematically executing their political opponents and sworn enemies, the Tutsi, largely by hacking them apart with machetes. Kagame had tracked Bushnell down by calling her husband at home in suburban Virginia.

“It was surreal,” she recalls of that April day in 1994. “There I am with a beer in my hand, shorts and walking shoes, pacing up and down the kitchen. Can you imagine?”

The U.S. government had promised no troops—only talking points, which Bushnell had to deliver. The killing must stop, and Kagame and the Rwandan government must return to stalled peace talks. Kagame, usually dispassionate, burst out: “Madame, they are killing my people!”

“I was so seized by what he was saying,” Bushnell reflects. “But I couldn’t say, ‘Oh my God, I’m appalled. Help is on the way.’” So she said the only empathetic thing she could think of: “General, I wish you peace.”

Peace has largely eluded Bushnell in her career as a senior diplomat. She has managed crises in some of the most suffering places: Rwanda, Burundi, Liberia, Guatemala. The Rwandan genocide claimed 800,000 lives. President Clinton said that even a modest U.S. troop commitment—maybe 5,000—could have stanchied the killing. But the administration, fearful of U.S. casualties, balked at intervention. And this haunts Bushnell.

“We chose our national interest,” she says. “And how can you argue with that? This was a domestic fight ... [But] the choice was to watch hundreds of thousands of people, innocent people, be slaughtered by their neighbors using hand tools. And that’s what we chose to do.”

Bushnell is credited by historians, journalists, and her colleagues as the only high-ranking U.S. official to keep attention focused on the killing. Today, she is heralded. Ten years ago, she was dismissed. “People were making fun of me,” she says. “Like, ‘How naïve can you be? Don’t get so emotional.’” It was just Rwanda.

But Bushnell saw the genocide in starkly human terms. She recalls “the relentlessness



of the killing." One day, at a meeting, she asked her colleagues how long someone could physically go on killing with a machete until he got tired and had to stop. "It takes a lot of work," Bushnell reasons.

But later, Bushnell learned that some of the Hutus rested while others went out butchering. "That made me believe in evil," she says.

A Foreign Service brat, Bushnell thought she'd never enter her father's profession; he was an administrative counselor with the U.S. embassies in France, Pakistan, and Iran. But in 1981, Bushnell entered the diplomatic corps under a program to admit women and minorities at the midcareer level.

She rose to the top, becoming ambassador to Kenya in 1996. She laughs recalling her rather inauspicious beginning: when she arrived in Nairobi, the embassy staff at the airport didn't recognize her. The second in command was stuck in traffic, and the others apparently hadn't seen Bushnell's picture.

But others, whom Bushnell had never met, would soon be watching her.

On August 7, 1998, members of the upstart terrorist group al-Qaeda bombed the

U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. It was learned later that al-Qaeda had picked the Nairobi embassy partly because a female ambassador was in charge. They believed a woman's death would draw greater publicity. "They wanted me dead," Bushnell says.

Whatever heroics she couldn't exercise for Rwanda, she showed in Nairobi. The bombing survivors have characterized her as the glue that held them together. She and her staff never closed the embassy. They moved to temporary quarters, where she hung a quotation "to remind people of how I viewed their efforts," she says. The passage reads, "Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying, 'I will try again tomorrow.'"

Today, Bushnell keeps that quote on a shelf in her office at the Foreign Service Institute, where she is dean of the leadership and management school. Her lessons from Nairobi form the core curriculum of a class for senior officials on leading in a crisis.

Though she's stared down evil twice, Bushnell doesn't overestimate her reach. "My control, if I'm lucky, ends right here," she

says, extending her arm and pointing to her index fingertip. "I can't beat myself up, because God knows I have, for things over which I have no control."

Maybe not control. But there is satisfaction. During the genocide, in a phone call with Augustin Bizimungu, the chief of staff of the Rwandan army, Bushnell lashed out when Bizimungu claimed he couldn't stop the killing. She knew he was an active participant.

"I really wanted to let him know that, 'I know who you are; I know what you're doing,'" she says. "I said, 'Well, General, I want you to know that President Clinton is going to hold you personally accountable ... His answer was, 'Oh, Madame, how nice of the President to be thinking of me.'"

Today, Bizimungu is in jail. Eight years after their phone call, Bushnell crossed paths with an international team on its way to arrest the deposed official. She requested they give Bizimungu a personal message: "Remind him what I said."

Telling that story, resoluteness overtakes Bushnell's face, and she seems to realize that, sometimes, the tip of her finger reaches farther than the space in front of her.



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Call to Service

Deal Maker

The Energy Department's Nicole Nelson-Jean held her own against a group of Russian Cold War veterans to negotiate a nuclear security agreement

By George Cahlink



Nicole Nelson-Jean was warned about working with Russian Navy officers. They were grizzled Cold Warriors, many in their late fifties and sixties, who had the reputation of being among the world's toughest

negotiators. They rarely dealt with women and would not respect a twenty-eight-year-old who was also black, she was told. So she might want to reconsider taking an Energy Department job that involved negotiating a nuclear security agreement with them.

"The Russians were certainly surprised when I walked into the room. Some of them would not talk to me at first, but they did once they realized that I was the boss," recalls Nelson-Jean, now thirty-two and the Energy attaché to the U.S. ambassador to Japan.

Nelson-Jean was working for Energy contractor Wackenhut Corp. in 2000 when

she took a federal job managing the department's nuclear security programs and training facilities in Russia. One of her top priorities was finalizing an agreement with the Russian Ministry of Defense to secure former Soviet nuclear materials and weapons. The deal she eventually negotiated paved the way for the construction of the Kola Technical Center in Murmansk, Russia, the first nuclear security training facility in the formerly communist nation.

JoAnne Phipps, Energy's director of international operations, says Nelson-Jean's attitude allowed her to overcome diplomatic delays that had plagued more senior negotiators. "She sees everything as an opportunity to succeed rather than an obstacle," Phipps says.

Nelson-Jean's first challenge was getting American and Russian officials into the same room after talks had stalled for more than a year. Previous negotiations had been conducted largely via e-mail. So, Nelson-Jean began making regular trips to Russia and her counterparts were invited to the United States to discuss the agreement.

On those trips, Nelson-Jean often would find herself the sole female meeting with as many as twenty male Russian naval officers, each old enough to be her father. Her Russian counterparts often called her "Ms. Condoleezza." She laughs about it now, saying it's a "privilege" to be put in the same category as National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice.

Nelson-Jean succeeded in wrapping up negotiations with the Russians only four months after taking over. And as the talks wound down, she received perhaps her highest compliment. The Russians began bringing female negotiators to the meetings.

JAY WESTCOTT

TO THOSE WHO CONTINUOUSLY REACH NEW HEIGHTS.



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Homeland Security

Mr. Cleanup

When terrorists hit New York, emergency manager Brad Gair helped the city's residents recover

By Denise Kersten

Brad Gair wasn't surprised when the crowd hissed at him. It was a Sunday afternoon in May 2002, and about 500 people had gathered in New York's Chinatown to voice dissatisfaction with 9/11 relief

efforts. They spoke about poor air quality in their neighborhood and the difficulty of getting help from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

They were angry, and felt no one in government was listening. As the man in charge of delivering \$8.8 billion in aid and coordinat-

ter Melnick, Gair's chief of staff for the World Trade Center disaster. "He doesn't shy away from that."

Gair has a knack for connecting with people. After a tornado destroyed Stockton, Missouri, in May 2003, he helped build consensus for a long-term plan to draw tourism by capitalizing on a nearby lake. "He gets things done without pushing people," says Ralph Steele, the town's mayor. "We felt like it was our idea."

In Chinatown, red tape was making it difficult to get aid. Gair was frank: "I'm not going to make any promises," he told the crowd, though he did vow to speak with meeting organizers a week later. "We went back and did some pretty creative things," he says. For example, because many Chinatown residents don't have the traditional leases or mortgages required for FEMA's Mortgage and Rental Assistance program, the agency accepted sworn statements from residents' neighbors.

Those who work with Gair say his creativity and determination helped save New York. Melnick was so inspired by Gair's dedication that he decided to stay with FEMA after the World Trade Center effort wrapped up. "He gave me a new outlook," says Melnick, who had retired after thirty-plus years in the New York City Police Department. But Gair made his biggest contributions where he's most comfortable—far from the public eye. When too many MRA applications were denied by out-of-state caseworkers, he set up a New York-based task force to review the rejections. The program turned around.

Gair's work on a 2003 federal funding measure helped the city get money fast. "Brad's thing was that if New York City goes under financially, the terrorists win," says Dan Mahoney, an aide to Gair. "He didn't like that at all. Not on his watch."

KEN MISSENER

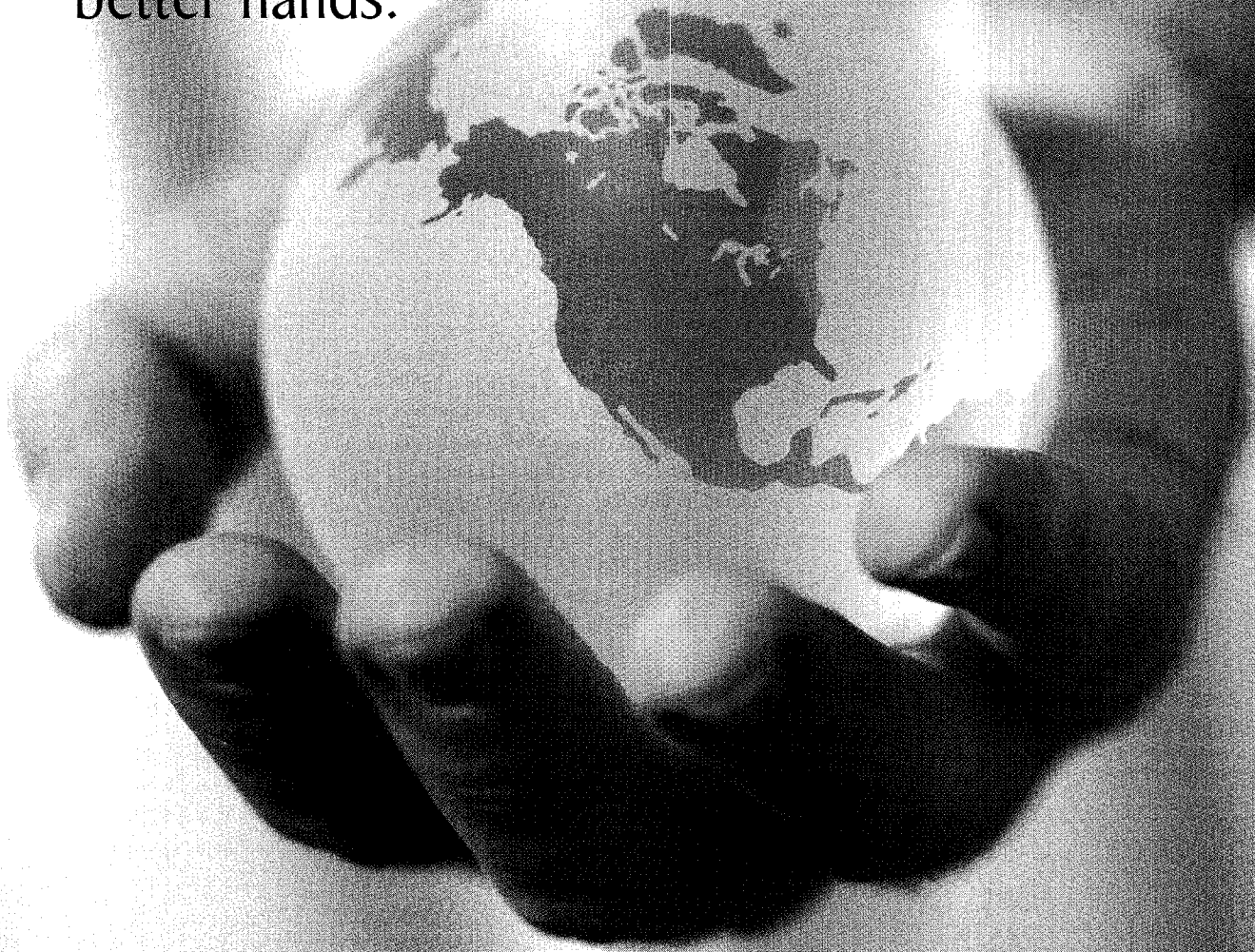


ing the entire federal recovery effort in New York, FEMA's Gair had expected to become a target for pent-up frustration. Facing angry crowds is part of his job as a federal coordination officer.

"If somebody feels they're being pushed around by the government, he'll go talk to them and find out what's wrong," says Wal-

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Justice and Law Enforcement

South Side Sleuth

Peter Darling charmed smugglers to bust
a Chicago drug ring that used babies as cover

By Shawn Zeller

It was in May 1999 that the call came in from British Customs and Excise to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement office in Chicago. Agents had picked up a woman from Chicago with six kilograms

of liquefied cocaine disguised as baby formula. She said the baby she was traveling with wasn't her own.

The case fell on the desk of Immigration and Customs Enforcement Senior Special Agent Peter Darling. A records search revealed that the baby had traveled fre-

conspiracy devised by a Chicago gang to use infants as cover to smuggle drugs from Panama to the United States and Europe. Heading up "Operation Kids for Cover," he found that twenty-two infants were used as decoys on forty-five trips. Eleven were rented from their parents.

Darling, along with fellow agent Billy Warren, conducted scores of interviews in Chicago's down-and-out South Side. "Every courier would put us onto another two couriers and another baby," Darling recalls. "The conspiracy just grew and grew." It took more than two years of investigating to reach the first trials.

Elissa Brown, special agent in charge of ICE's Chicago office, calls it "good old-fashioned criminal investigation work." But what impresses her most is how Darling, a white man with a thick Boston accent, convinced poor black Chicagoans to open up. "He treated them with such respect," she says. In the end, she recalls, many of the women who'd exploited their children regretted their actions. They thanked Darling, crediting him with rescuing them from a downward spiral and their children from abuse and neglect. "You just don't see that," says Brown.

The investigation has resulted in forty-nine convictions. The leader of the conspiracy was sentenced to life in prison in 2003. Darling praises prosecutor Scott Levine for keeping his eye on the case: "He wanted to get every single courier involved in this thing."

Darling says he simply used common sense to make it happen. "I knew this was not my neighborhood and these people have to live here every day ... I said, 'I understand you are in a tough position and made some mistakes.'"



quently with a number of women. "It seemed very odd," Darling recalls. The parents claimed that the baby had been kidnapped, but Darling wasn't buying it.

It wasn't a sexy case, the kind that lends itself to photo opportunities with huge piles of drugs and money. But Darling's tenacious investigating revealed a widespread

National Security and International Affairs

Master Builder

On the heels of U.S. troops, Stephen Browning went to Baghdad in 2003 and helped engineer the reconstruction of postwar Iraq

By Katherine McIntire Peters

It would be hard to overstate how important the reconstruction of Iraq is to long-term American security.

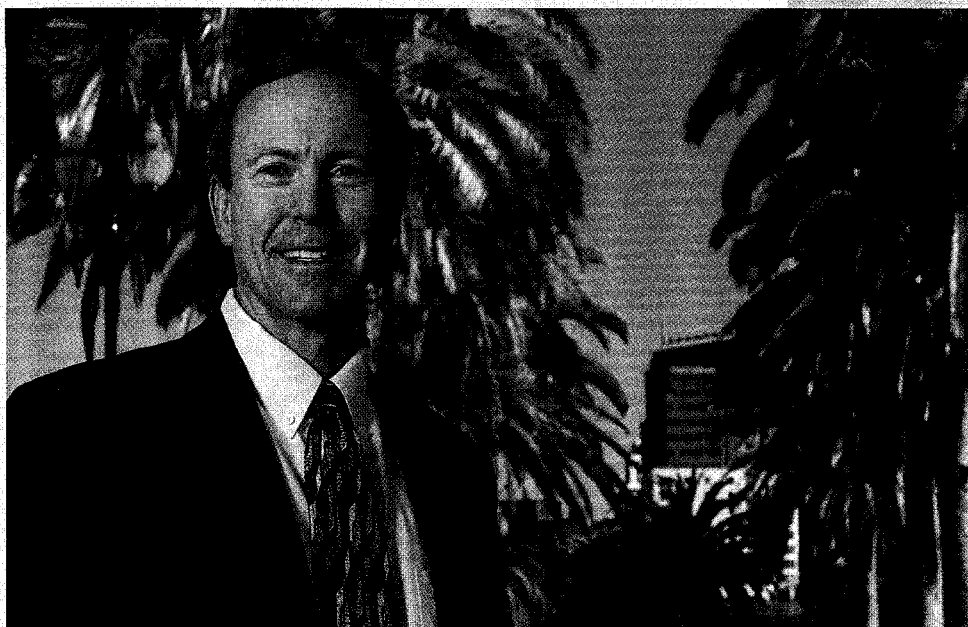
While the outcome of American ambitions in Iraq won't be clear for many years, U.S. officials seem to agree: Stephen Browning has worked tirelessly to make reconstruction a success and to bring a semblance of normalcy to the troubled nation.

Browning, then a senior program director with the Army Corps of Engineers, was one of only three civilian reconstruction specialists to enter Baghdad immediately after U.S. troops arrived there in April 2003. Selected by retired Army General Jay Garner, director of the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (OHRA), Browning quickly demonstrated leadership that earned him multiple responsibilities. While he initially focused on restoring electricity across the country, his role quickly expanded and he became senior adviser to the ministries of health, religious affairs, transportation, and communications. He also helped create a ministry of environmental affairs.

"Iraqi engineers literally were holding things together with baling wire," says Browning. The needs were overwhelming: getting government workers back to work and paid, providing basic security, removing Saddam Hussein loyalists from positions of authority. Browning navigated tricky political currents running through Iraqi society as well. He received death threats, and assassination attempts were made against some of his teammates.

"I was too busy to really think about being afraid," says Browning.

According to Lieutenant General Robert Flowers, the former chief of engineers and sen-



ior leader in the Corps, "Browning epitomizes selfless service. He is truly one of the most talented individuals I've known." Colleagues praised Browning's "amazing work ethic" and described him as the "go-to guy" in Baghdad. L. Paul Bremer, former U.S. administrator in Iraq and director of the Coalition Provisional Authority, the successor to OHRA, was so impressed that he named Browning deputy director for infrastructure and senior adviser to the Ministry of Electricity.

Browning volunteered for duty in Baghdad because he thought he could make a difference, he says. He previously had spent time in the Middle East and spoke some classic Arabic. He returned home last winter to San Francisco. There, he is director of programs for the Corps' South Pacific division. But Browning remains disconcerted by what he left behind. "There was a sense of loss there, of abandoning the mission," he says. "There's so much yet to be done."





Service to
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Science and Environment

Quantum Matchmaker

Physicist Deborah Jin brought unsociable atoms together to create a new form of matter

By Beth Dickey

Late last year, Deborah Jin coaxed several hundred thousand fiercely antisocial atomic particles to dance as partners in a very, very cold gas. What resulted was one of the most sought-after, bizarre, and basic forms

of matter, giving scientists a potential key to unlock the secrets of superconductivity.

Jin, a physicist with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) in Boulder, Colorado, led a team in creating the first Fermi condensate on December 16, 2003. Their work has been described as a crucial

scientists understand the basic physics behind them.

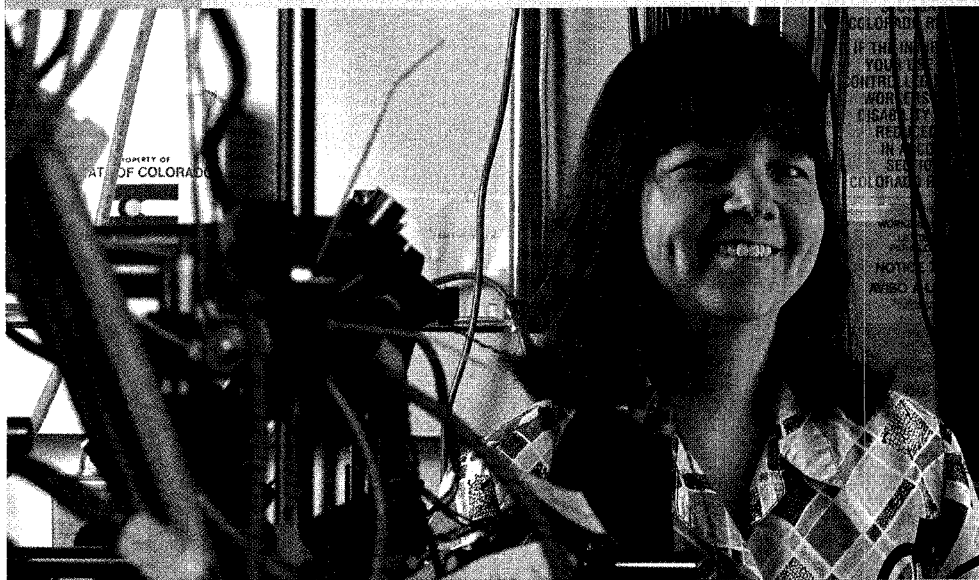
"We've opened a door. We don't know where it will lead," says Jin, who also teaches at the University of Colorado. One thing is certain: the thirty-five-year-old daughter of physicists and mother of a toddler, Jin has become a role model for young women in a discipline dominated by men.

Her creation builds on an earlier achievement that earned two NIST colleagues a share in the 2001 Nobel Prize for physics. In 1995, Eric Cornell and Carl Wieman created a similar form of matter by trapping and cooling bosons, one of two essential kinds of atoms, until the particles huddled together and behaved identically, like a single super atom. Their creation kicked off an intense race to condense the other essential kind of atoms, fermions. Jin won the race, enticing normally repellent atoms to pair up like electrons in a superconductor.

Unlike bosons, fermions avoid each other when refrigerated to the extremes necessary for superconductivity. Jin—who won a \$500,000 "genius grant" from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation last year—got around that by using a magnetic field as a fine-tunable Cupid, forcing loner atoms to pair up, and controlling the strength of the pairing by adjusting the magnetic field. As pairs of fermions began behaving like bosons, they coalesced into a novel form of matter. "The strength of pairing in our fermionic condensate," Jin says, "would correspond to a room-temperature superconductor."

Not everyone agrees with her, but Cornell hails the feat as a "major breakthrough." He notes that it was much more difficult than the one that inspired it. "I was interested," he says, "but I thought it would be too hard."

first step in developing superconductors that work at room temperature. Superconductors, which transmit electricity without any energy loss, aren't widely used because it costs too much to keep them sufficiently chilled. At room temperature, however, they could lead to faster computers, smaller cell phones, lower electric bills, and heretofore unimagined technologies. Jin has developed a tool to help



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Social Services

Privacy's Protectors

A Federal Trade Commission team saves
the dinner hour from telemarketers

By Shawn Zeller



Eileen Harrington remembers well what dinner hour was like before the Federal Trade Commission created the Do Not Call Registry. Telemarketers were supposed to put consumers on

companies' do-not-call lists if they requested it. But, Harrington recalls, "They would hang up before I could finish the sentence."

In 1999, as the FTC's associate director for marketing practices, Harrington started to review telemarketing rules. She found that her own experience was similar to that of many consumers who had complained to the agency. "There had been a dramatic increase in calls," says Harrington. And the old rules weren't protecting angry consumers.

At the time, twenty-three states already had passed laws creating do-not-call

lists, but they weren't uniform. In some cases, consumers had to pay to be on the list. "That's when we decided that the most sensible thing to do would be to give consumers one place to go to opt out," she says.

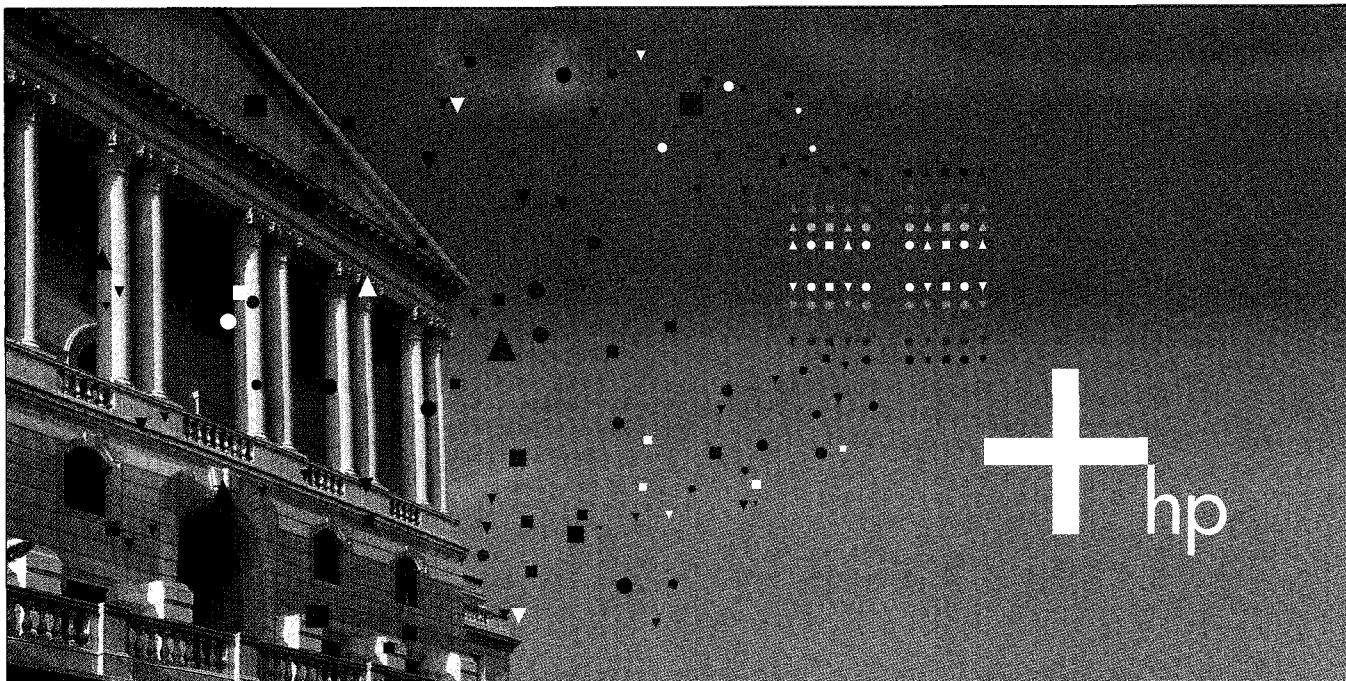
The decision sent Harrington and her team—including Lois Greisman, Carolyn Shanoff, David Torok, Stephen Warren, Allen Hile, and Lawrence Demille Wagman—caroming on a regulatory roller coaster. Initially, Congress members resisted providing start-up funds for the registry. Two federal courts put it on hold, one deciding that the FTC lacked authority to create it, the other saying that it violated telemarketers' First Amendment rights.

Each time, though, public enthusiasm pulled the FTC through. After a meeting with FTC Chairman Timothy Muris, then House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Billy Tauzin (R-La.), one of the principal skeptics in Congress, became an enthusiastic supporter. After an Oklahoma court put the registry on hold, Congress acted the next day to assure the court that the FTC had its approval. In Denver, a federal appeals court agreed to hear the First Amendment case on an expedited basis, and quickly threw out the telemarketers' claims.

Since the FTC began collecting phone numbers last year, more than 62 million consumers have signed up. Telemarketers fund the registry with fees they pay to access the list. Already, the FTC has issued steep fines to companies that called listed consumers. A January Harris poll found that 92 percent reported receiving fewer calls.

"We expected this to be a popular service," Harrington says. "We didn't know just how popular. We were stunned."

CENTER: Eileen Harrington
LEFT TO RIGHT: Lois Greisman,
Allen Hile, Stephen Warren, Carolyn Shanoff,
and Lawrence Demille Wagman



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DECEMBER 2004 | THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY

INNOCENT BYSTANDER Knock It Off

The art of the unreal

BY CULLEN MURPHY

One of the more salient sideshows during the past election campaign was the episode involving Dan Rather, *60 Minutes*, and some documents that allegedly offered a glimpse into George W. Bush's career in the Texas Air National Guard. It was a sideshow with side effects. The documents, as you may remember, were said to have been written by Bush's commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel Jerry B. Killian, and they purported to show that Killian had been pressured by "somebody upstairs" to "sugarcoat" Bush's performance rating. No sooner had they been made public than experts began to question their authenticity—noting, for instance, that the fonts resembled those found on a modern computer, not a Vietnam-era typewriter. CBS News backed away from the documents and acknowledged that its reporting methods had been flawed. In moist partisan circles this controversy will probably persist forever, much as radio waves of *Leave It to Beaver* venture eternally into space. More immediately, the effect has been to sully the reputation of a major news organization, and to take questions about the President's National Guard service out of circulation.

Forgeries are always an arresting phenomenon. No one pauses anymore for stories about "new clues to origin of universe," but the word "forgery" in a headline remains a stopper. Even when forgeries are badly done, they highlight the capacious self-delusion that must have been necessary for anyone to be fooled. When they are superb, they represent a triumph of the human spirit.

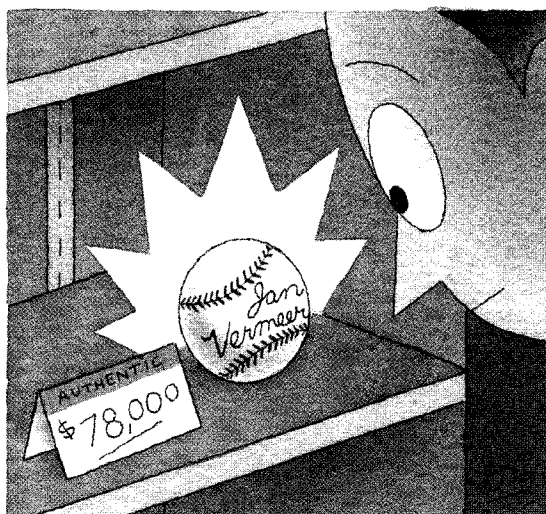
Dishonest? Yes. Malicious? Frequently. Effective? More often than not. And forgeries are everywhere. The term "knockoff" can now serve as a prefix to any commodity at all—knockoff perfume, handbags, clothing, green cards, DVDs. In an age of biometrics, forgeries have vast new domains to conquer. It is common to speak of prominent people as "actors" on history's stage, but forgeries, which play a part through artistic deception, are the real actors.

The part they play is sometimes of great consequence—for good or ill. The ancient Gaelic poems of the bard "Ossian," which helped create the mod-

greater standing. *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, with its clumsy passages about a Jewish drive for world domination, was a concoction of the secret police in czarist Russia—a fact not conceded by the Russian government until 1993, a century after the toxins had leached into the anti-Semitic world.

Forgeries like these serve an essentially political purpose. Most forgeries, though, serve an economic one—they're done to make money (sometimes literally). Forgery in the art world has been widespread for centuries. It has been said that Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot painted 2,000 pictures, of which 10,000

are in the United States. The British Museum once mounted an exhibit consisting entirely of forgeries, spanning three millennia. "In Italy," according to Salvatore Casillo, the curator of the University of Salerno's Museum of Fakes, "if you're a good enough counterfeiter, you eventually get your own show." In the 1980s a man named Mark Hofmann hatched an ingenious plot: to create historical documents so embarrassing to the Church of Jesus Christ



ern version of olden Scotland, were the nineteenth-century invention of their "translator," James Macpherson. The claim of the papacy to temporal power over parts of Italy was based on a document known as the Donation of Constantine, which purported to be an imperial land grant from the fourth century A.D. It was in fact an eighth-century forgery, but the papacy did not give in on sovereignty until 1929. The Shabaka Stone, from Egypt, was chiseled around 700 B.C., but in the style and language of many centuries earlier—a fake antique, designed to give its theological insights

of Latter-day Saints that church elders would simply buy them up—and they did. The scheme eventually spiraled out of control, leading to Hofmann's conviction for what today are called "the Mormon murders." In recent years one of the most lucrative terrains for the forger has been that of sports memorabilia—autographed balls and bats and jerseys, for instance. A company called WeTrak, whose investors include Emmitt Smith, of the Arizona Cardinals, combats the sale of forged items by attaching tiny computer chips to the clothing and equipment athletes actually use.

100 YEARS AGO IN THE ATLANTIC

"Remarks at the Peace Banquet"

On October 7, 1904, the philosopher and psychologist William James gave a speech before the international World's Peace Congress, in Boston. The text, an excerpt of which appears below, was published in the December 1904 issue of *The Atlantic*.

From time immemorial wars have been, especially for non-combatants, the supremely thrilling excitement. Heavy and dragging at its end, at its outset every war means an explosion of imaginative energy. The dams of routine burst, and boundless prospects open. The remotest spectators share the fascination. With that awful struggle [the Russo-Japanese War] now in progress on the confines of the world, there is not a man in this room, I suppose, who doesn't buy both an evening and a morning paper, and first of all pounce on the war column.

A deadly listlessness would come over most men's imagination of the future if they could seriously be brought to believe that never again in saecula saeculorum would a war trouble human history. In such a stagnant summer afternoon of a world, where would be the zest or interest?

This is the constitution of human nature which we have to work against. The plain truth is that people want war. They want it anyhow; for itself; and apart from each and every possible consequence. It is the final bouquet of life's fireworks. The born soldiers want it hot and actual. The non-combatants want it in the background, and always as an open possibility, to feed imagination on and keep excitement going. Its clerical and historical defenders fool themselves when they talk as they do about it. What moves them is not the blessing it has won for us, but a vague religious exaltation. War, they feel, is human nature at its uttermost. We are here to do our uttermost. It is a sacrament. Society would rot, they think, without the mystical blood-payment.

[Volume 94, No. 566, page 846]

When a touchdown ball is brought to the sidelines, an official implants a chip. A number of companies now offer authentication services for sports memorabilia. (Of course, the forgers are not asleep: there are also fake authentication companies.)

But the demand side of forgery, involving the potential for profit, does not come close to explaining the outlandish amount of supply. In all likelihood some elemental impulse pushes people toward fakery, much as a biological impulse pushes people to reproduce. The fakes are sometimes laughed off the stage almost at once (as was the case in 1796 with *Vortigern and Rowena*, a "lost" Shakespeare play written by William Henry Ireland), but in the best cases the deception isn't discovered for years, or at all. Piltdown Man, the seemingly fossilized remains of an ancestral missing link, discovered in England in 1912, was eventually revealed as a hoax, assembled from the skull of an Australian aborigine and the jaw of an orangutan. We still don't know for sure who created Piltdown Man, or why, but we should be grateful for this singular contribution to the annals of human mischief (and I pray that the perpetrator was indeed Teilhard de Chardin).

Every decade or so an act of forgery achieves a level of audacity that renews one's confidence in human aspiration. In the 1980s it was the "Hitler Diaries," vouched for by the historian Hugh Trevor-Roper and published in the German magazine *Der Stern*, which turned out to be the work of a Stuttgart memorabilia dealer. The most audacious forgery of the 1990s was a collection of letters, notes, and other jottings in the hand, it was believed, of President John F. Kennedy, which revealed that JFK had had an affair with Marilyn Monroe and had paid her mother \$600,000 in hush money. The documents foundered on a shoal of counter-evidence, such as the use of ZIP codes before they had been introduced.

Back in the late 1920s this magazine became the victim of an accomplished forger when it published the purported letters of Ann Rutledge and Abraham Lincoln. A romance between the two, who both lived in New Salem,

Illinois, in the 1830s, had long been the subject of historical speculation, and now—lo!—here was the proof. The handwritten letters were brought to the magazine by a woman named Wilma Frances Minor, and validated by no less a figure than Lincoln's biographer Carl Sandburg, among others. But soon after publication the truth began to come out, as historians noted anachronisms in the correspondence, such as references to people's leaving for "Kansas" long before it was open to settlement or the name was in use.

Every forger works with a reliable accomplice: his victim. Forgeries depend on credulousness as much as craft. Letters written by Mary Magdalene to Lazarus ought to raise an eyebrow, especially if composed in French—but the buyers of the nineteenth-century forgeries by Vrain-Denis Lucas were not deterred. The Vermeers of the Dutch forger Han van Meegeren, despite their artificial aging, are not really all that good; the essential extra ingredient was the vulpine cupidity of the dupes—among them Hermann Göring. A few years ago an FBI probe of memorabilia fraud turned up a highly improbable object: a baseball signed by Mother Teresa. But who wouldn't have wanted such a thing, to a degree that might overrule judgment?

Indeed, it could well be that some of my own recent acquisitions are too good to be true. There's the White House business card with Karl Rove's name on one side, and the phone number of Swift Boat Veterans for Truth scribbled on the other. There's the crumpled page from a pink WHILE YOU WERE OUT pad addressed to "Sec'y Rumsfeld" from "Geo. Tenet" and dated the day Operation Iraqi Freedom commenced: "Ooops! Maybe no WMD after all. Pls. call. (Not urgent.)" And then there's the hastily scrawled note from Attorney General John Ashcroft, written to an aide just after President Bush's second debate with John Kerry: "POTUS says he's *against* Dred Scott decision. Dbbl. ck. all new fed. bench nominees, pronto."

Some of this stuff probably deserves a new round of scrutiny, and I welcome the experts. Even if *60 Minutes* isn't interested, Salvatore Casillo will be. ▀

Cullen Murphy is *The Atlantic's* managing editor.

Flavorless No More

Small batch by small batch, the makers of a new artisanal vodka have tapped into the market for America's best-selling spirits

BY CORBY KUMMER

I've never been much of a mixer—at least not when it comes to hard liquor. I learned my lesson young, as most people do. But later, when I began to want actual flavor and even subtlety in what I drank, I saw a higher logic to “never mix, never worry.” The peat smoke and toasted barley in a single-malt Islay whisky; the sweet corn and new-charred white oak in Tennessee whiskey; the pure pear perfume of Poiré William, with the whole fruit miraculously preserved inside the bottle—why do anything but savor the spirit neat, or with a bit of water to make it bloom?

Distillers wield an impressive array of techniques and secret potions to make their liquors mysteriously deep-flavored. They age them for years in barrels to achieve rich caramel color and complex flavors. But what of clear liquors that are often meant to be the basis of a martini or a gimlet—or the inexplicably popular vinyl-pink cosmopolitan? What, specifically, of vodka, the liquor I relied on in college for its minimal aftereffects?

Vodka is supposed to be flavorless. According to the official U.S. government definition, it is a neutral spirit “without distinctive character, aroma, taste, or color.” A good vodka or gin is considered to be one without the harsh, rubbing-alcohol fumes of ethanol, which can be overpowering in a high-proof clear liquor. Gin has an herbal base that effectively masks the ethanol: its chief component is juniper berries, whose principal use in the kitchen, after all, is to camouflage gaminess. It was logical for gin

makers to cash in on the “premium” and “super-premium” craze and promote their own exclusive blends of roots and herbs. Vodka was a less likely candidate.

Stolichnaya paved the way, as William Grimes recounts in his witty *Straight Up or on the Rocks* (2001). By 1976 vodka had overtaken gin and whiskey as the top-selling spirit in this country—a position it has mostly continued to hold in the nearly three decades since. But Stolichnaya stum-

ing \$20 to \$25 a bottle are premium, \$25 and up super-premium.) In the late 1980s I visited the Absolut factory, in a particularly beautiful part of southern Sweden near Malmö. The news then was flavorings like citron and pepper, which lent themselves to Absolut's colorful Pop Art-influenced ads. Flavorings made a virtue of the need to soften the harshness of nearly pure alcohol, and captured a big new market. But on my visit I came to appreciate qualities my guides never emphasized: the texture and taste of unflavored vodka.

Every vodka *does* have a flavor, I discovered, and the base ingredient determines it. Vodka can be made from any starch or sugar that will ferment into alcohol. It originated (in Poland or Russia, depending on who's writing the history) as a rustic homemade spirit distilled from any sugar source at hand, such as beets or molasses; the ethanol was masked by honey, pepper, citrus peel, and the like. With the arrival of industrial stills and charcoal filters, in the early 1800s, the defining technique became the filtering and dilution of 190-proof alcohol into a smoother but still potent liquor, usually 80 proof.

When I returned from Scandinavia, I began tasting many kinds of vodka, and found potato vodka to be the cleanest-tasting; examples are the reigning Chopin, pure and fiery, and Glacier. If I had to drink straight shots at, say, a Russian meeting where the rule of no eating after the first round was being observed, I would want them to be a good potato vodka—even though the Russians, surprisingly, scorn it.

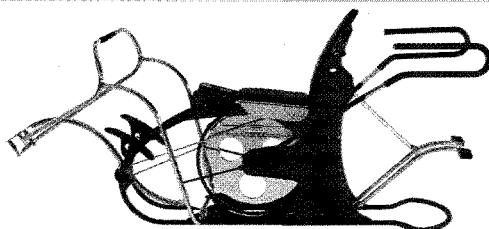
Most vodkas, in Russia and elsewhere, are distilled not from potatoes but from grains. Few grains can compare with wheat for balance and sweetness (as I discovered again when sampling many small-batch bourbons). Rye, for example, is a bit rough and sour to my taste, whether in whiskey or



bled after the Soviet downing of Flight 007, in 1982, hurt sales of Russian products and left a ready market for the Swedish premium-priced Absolut. (Like “colossal” as applied to olives, “premium” and “super-premium” have little immediately discernible meaning. The general rule is that vodkas cost-

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in vodka (Belvedere and Wyborowa are rye vodkas).

But it is exotic flavorings, with exotic variant spellings (kurant, pepper), that have kept market attention on high-priced vodkas—along with frosted and odd bottles. None of this has much to do with the way the vodka is distilled, the quality of the ingredients, or whether it is what to my mind would actually merit a "super-premium" designation: something produced in small quantities under close supervision, using local ingredients.

The rise of connoisseur vodkas opened an unexpected vista to two artisan distillers, Ansley Coale and Jörg Rupf, who inhabit two corners of northern-California paradise. Coale redefined American brandy with his Germain-Robin, distilled from the best Mendocino County wines that he and Hubert Germain-Robin, the descendant of a long line of French cognac producers, can find. Germain-Robin is aged in barrels in the matchless climate of far northern California, and critics regularly call it the best in the world (see my "Don't Call It Cognac," December 1995 *Atlantic*). Rupf, too, is descended from generations of distillers, in his case makers of Alsatian eau de vie; he has pursued his inherited art in Alameda, in the Bay Area next to Oakland. His Aqua Perfecta eaux de vie, distilled from raspberries, pears, cherries, and other fruit that is never processed or even refrigerated, are highly regarded here and more so in Europe.

Until a few years ago Coale and Rupf had never worked together, but they shared a great deal. Both made their reputations by practicing a half-learned European craft to transform top-quality California ingredients in European artisan stills, giant copper contraptions that look like something from Jan van Eyck or Hieronymus Bosch. Both received rapturous reviews and numerous awards. And both had more and more trouble getting their products into liquor stores.

The network of family-run liquor distributors that prevailed in the United States into the 1980s has largely disappeared. As in many other businesses,

consolidation and corporate ownership are in the ascendant; as a result, ties to local communities and the ability to gamble on a small brand have been lost. Salespeople work on commission, and it is rarely worth their time to talk up an eau de vie likely to sell a few bottles at best. However exalted their quality, Germain-Robin and Aqua Perfecta are niche products, relegated to the bottom of a distributor's list. With the increasing consolidation of liquor distributors (some states have just two or three), Coale and Rupf were seeing their products fall off lists altogether.

Vodka, of course, is at the top of any list. And artisan, or at least artisan-style, vodkas were commanding high prices. In the mid-1990s the success of Belvedere and the French Grey Goose, with its brandylike toffee flavor and plum aftertaste, showed that people would pay \$30 a bottle for vodka. The Dutch Ketel One—sweet,

ucts seriously. They knew they could never make from scratch the quantity of vodka required. It was natural, though, to use Rupf's great expertise in distilling fruits. Rupf thought to blend handmade eau de vie distilled from fresh California fruit into a high-quality industrially produced vodka. He tasted every unflavored vodka he could find, and hit on one distilled in the Midwest from Great Plains wheat—"the best vodka there is," Coale grandly told me when I recently visited him and Rupf. (Of course, they didn't tell me who made it. To taste high-quality vodka distilled from North American wheat, look for Shakers, made in Minnesota, and Pearl, made in Canada.)

The difference between the four flavored vodkas made by Hangar One, as they named their new brand, and others starts with the freshness of the fruit Coale and Rupf use, and the fact that they use it only in season. Rupf

"Straight" Hangar One vodka is an unusual triumph: delicate to the nose and distinctly winy and light on the tongue. It has the gentle potency of an eau de vie, and a finesse I found in no other vodka.

with an indistinct but pleasant flavor, a syrupy texture, and a challah aftertaste—claims to be produced in "pot," or single-batch, stills like the ones Coale and Rupf use. (Industrial producers use continuous "column" stills, which require far less supervision and produce a far less focused reflection of the fruit, grain, herbal infusion, or wine being distilled.) Cîroc, a French vodka made from grapes (and thus really an eau de vie), and Citadelle, a French vodka made from wheat, come with similar claims and sell for similarly high prices. The claims are somewhat mysterious, given the prohibitive cost of single-batch distilling in large quantity.

The likelihood is that a component of the vodka is distilled in single batches and added to an industrially distilled base. This is the method Coale and Rupf hit on in the spring of 2001, when they first discussed teaming up to make vodka as a way to get distributors to take their other prod-

buys from longtime suppliers and usually cleans the fruit and puts it to macerate in vodka the day it arrives. Raspberry was an easy choice, because Rupf has made eau de vie with it for years and knows the secret of extracting maximal flavor from berries. The men also chose a citron called Buddha's Hand, a fascinating though somewhat alarming fruit that looks like a sea creature you wouldn't want to cross. Unlike other citrus, it has an entirely sweet pith, and thus is well suited to maceration. Buddha's Hand, an Asian variety, has caught on in California, probably as much for its appearance as for its gentle but alluring flavor (I love citron, especially in marmalade, but standard varieties can be bitter; the closest exposure most people have had is with the green bits in fruitcake). To give life, color, and fresh-fruit texture Rupf adds to the base vodka some raspberry juice or a bit of the undistilled vodka infusion of citron, orange, or kaffir lime leaf.



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The real difference, though, is the addition of the same infusions after Rupf and Lance Winters, his partner, have distilled them into smooth, intensely perfumed eaux de vie. (Rupf does not redistill the bought vodka, and he dismisses claims from makers of high-priced vodkas that they distill three, four, or five times. "I don't know what that means in a continuous still," he says; U.S. law regulates any claims of multiple distillation on the label.) These bring a craft and elegance new to flavored vodkas.

I've never seen the point of flavored vodkas, and for all their elegance, Hangar Ones didn't really change my opinion. Well, two flavors didn't. I found the kaffir lime to be herbal and somewhat bitter, and the mandarin blossom—which includes distilled orange-flower infusion as well as the fruit—perfumey, with a very floral nose and a strong candied-orange flavor. (Distributors must sign up for rations of the raspberry, and no liquor stores in my area had any.) But I must admit that the Buddha's Hand citron was perfectly delicious—with an extremely bright nose and a flavor like a lovely fresh cross of lemon, lime, and orange. I wanted to mix it right away with Pimm's No. 1 and tonic water, find a chaise longue, and disappear for a few days.

The real test of any vodka maker is unflavored vodka. Coale set Rupf just that test: if the idea of their partnership was to get out of their small niches, they would need a noteworthy flagship. And they would need something they could always deliver. Seasonal fruit vodkas, unavailable in some months, are an oddity that baffles distributors.

Rupf had spent his life bringing flavors into pinpoint focus, but now he had to achieve a smooth, balanced, *unintense* flavor whose main virtue was masking the ethanol. To do this, big manufacturers have traditionally relied on sugar and citric acid—both of which U.S. law allows, in very low quantities, as "neutral" blenders in vodka. Coale and Rupf wanted to avoid additives they considered unnatural. To get rid of the ethanol fumes and enhance the texture, Rupf experimented with distilled wine

(unaged brandy). He found that wine made from viognier, an aromatic white grape, loses its identifiable character when distilled to a high proof but "works really well to black out the ethanol."

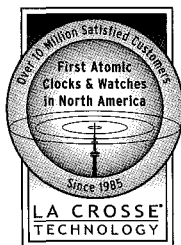
"Straight" Hangar One vodka is an unusual triumph: delicate to the nose, almost watery compared with other premium unflavored vodkas, and distinctly winy and light on the tongue. It has the gentle potency of an eau de vie, and a finesse I found in no other vodka. I wouldn't want to mix straight Hangar One with much more than ice and soda. But it would certainly make an elegant version of an inherently inelegant cocktail like the fruit-punchy cosmopolitan.

The name was inspired by the former naval air station across the road from Rupf's original distillery; Coale was drawn to the atmospheric, strangely quiet base, like a lost city. He found a dramatic 1930s nighttime photograph of a vast movie theater lit from within and slapped it onto a hastily designed Web site (www.hangarone.com). It turned out to be a kind of prophecy. Within a year of the first release Rupf was evicted (his landlord and neighbor said he wanted more space), so Rupf relocated his distillery to a former hangar on the base. It is ten times the size of his old location—and reminiscent of the picture Coale had found.

It is a spectacular place. Rupf told me that even on the hottest days the temperature inside seldom rises above the mid-70s—a claim I found easy to believe. The beautiful redwood rafters alone, not to mention the fifty-foot ceiling, absorb a good deal of heat. The men plan to open a full tasting room by Christmas, to replace the makeshift table I saw, covered with specimen jars of various macerating fruits. I was there on the first day the still was in action, distilling wine and filling the vast hangar with a warm, breadly scent. Anyone in the Bay Area should visit the plant to see eerily beautiful streamlined architecture—and to understand the distiller's art.

What began as a way to get a foothold on distributors' lists has in three years overtaken everything else the two men have ever done. Hangar

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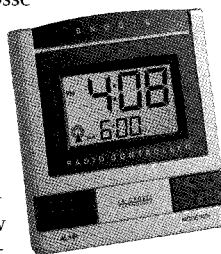


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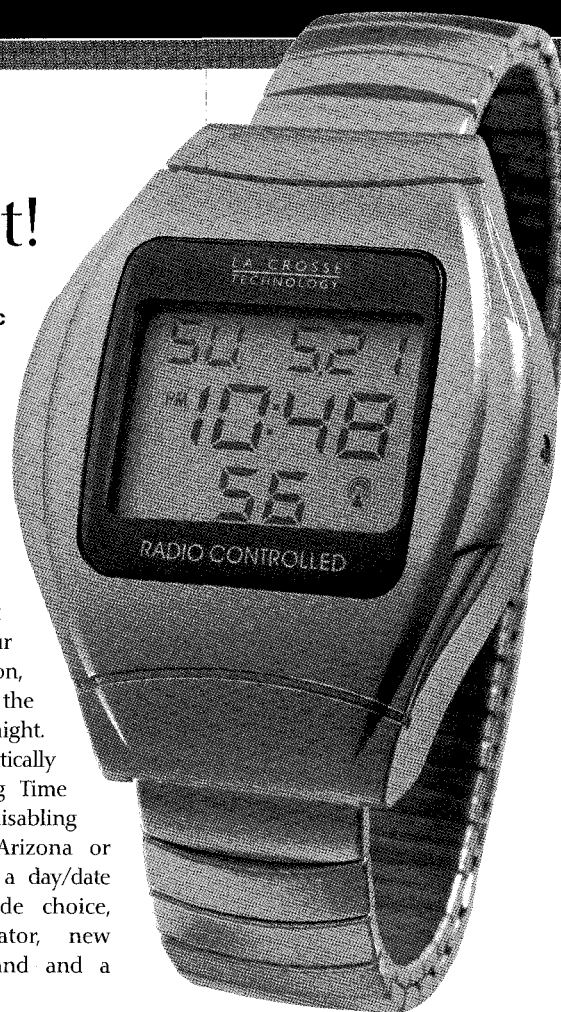
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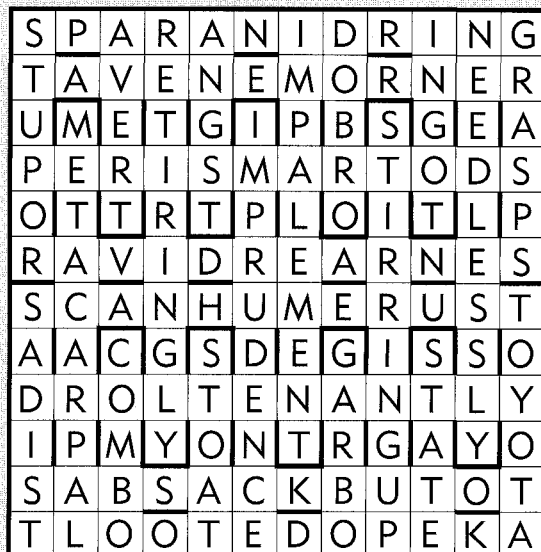
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ANSWERS TO THE NOVEMBER PUZZLER



"Leapfrog"

Across. 1. SP(A)RING; RAN + ID 10. NEMO (rev.); TA(VERNE)R 14. SMART (rev.); PERIODS (anag.) 15. DR + EAR; RAV(IN)ES 16. S + CANT; HUMERUS (homophone) 22. D(R)OLLY; TEN(AN)T 23. SA(BO)T; SACK + BUT 24. TOPEKA (anag.); LOO + TED *Down.* 1. STUPOR (anag.) 2. AVERT (hidden) 3. RE(TIRING)LY 4. ANGST (anag.) 5. IMP(A)LEMENT 6. DO + BRO 7. IN + GOT 8. NEEDLES + SLY 9. GRAS(P)S 11. MET(A + CARP)AL 12. IMP(R)UDENCE 13. STIRRING UP (anag.) 16. SAD + IS + T 17. T(O) + YOT + A (rev.) 18. COMB + O 19. STOAT (hidden) 20. GARB + O 21. S + T + ATE

One has sold exponentially beyond their initial projections. "So far we're small enough to do everything hand-controlled," Rupf told me. He wanted to keep it that way.

Coale told me that his dream is to avoid raising money for the huge investment in promotion usually required to build any liquor brand, and also the subsequent discounting to retailers to prop up sales figures. Rather than put money into advertising, he said, he wants to give profits to local distributors to put back into their communities as charitable contributions. Other large liquor manufacturers frequently donate to worthy causes, of course, and some even have well-publicized foundations. But Coale's idea is for decentralized, extremely local giving, to be determined by people right in the communities where it can help. "We want to do it, not trumpet it," he told me. Customers will "figure out," he said with his gift for promotional overstatement, "that we're making the best vodka there ever was." They'll say, "Look what these people are doing with their money!"

Coale had found enthusiasm among the few distributors he had approached—family-owned, and thus in the minority. "They're sensitive to this issue," he said, meaning giving back to the communities from which they profit. "Otherwise you can say they're just drug dealers." His next hurdle will be to persuade his investors to resist the high profit a quick sale of the company might bring, or any huge infusion of funds that would pay for advertising and promotion but involve ceding control. If unpersuaded stakeholders remain, he told me, he will try to find the money to buy them out.

I hope he succeeds. His is a model other artisans would doubtless be more than happy to follow—if only they could devise a way to tap into the market for America's best-selling spirits. If Hangar One's act-local model takes hold, maybe the big guys will follow it too. ■

Corby Kummer, a senior editor of The Atlantic, is the author of The Pleasures of Slow Food and The Joy of Coffee.

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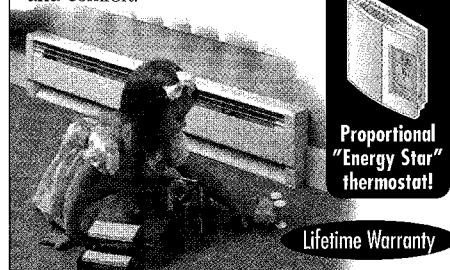
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5' 1250 watts	130-180 s.f.	\$229	
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\$15.00 shipping per heater	\$	
Total Amount	\$	



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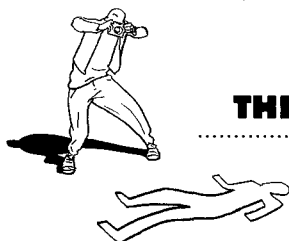
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THE PUZZLER

by EMILY COX and HENRY RATHVON

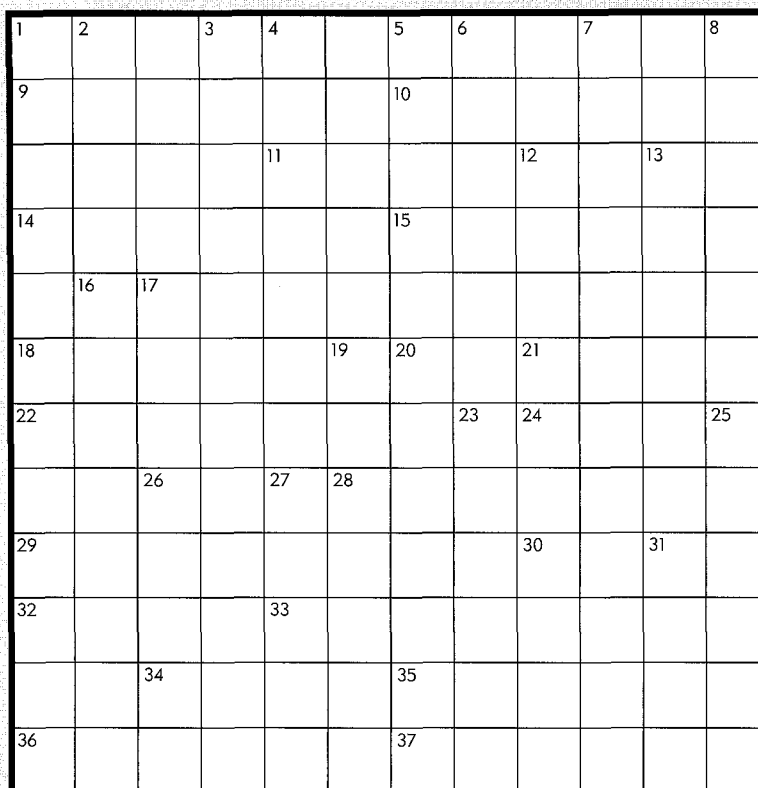
Cryptic Buffet

This month's offering is a feast of sorts. Heavy bars and answer lengths are withheld, but if bars were shown they would appear the same with the grid turned 180 degrees. Once all clue answers have been entered, a number of empty squares will remain; these should be circled. Each empty square's missing letter is supplied by an unclued buffet item running through it diagonally (up, down, left, or right); these foods have something in common. By reading the circled portions from left to right, solvers will be able to identify the meal. Eleven clue answers are capitalized; the answers to 35 Across and 16 Down are uncommon.

Last month's Puzzler solution is on page 194.

ACROSS

1. Something chewy and cold found in part of South America
5. Roughly push around irrational figure lacking in humility
9. Domestic quality about uncle and dad (*two words*)
10. Running after Number Twelve
11. Diplomacy took a new direction in speech
12. Fresh additive for tea
14. Pass over captain of a curling team
15. Hermit keeping guard for a greater span of time
17. Assist in amusement with last of sea animals
18. Close northern canal site
20. Excited head of state had a puff of pot
22. People accustomed to snow in June ski more
24. Iron out film genre
28. Signed new Nike deal at the outset
29. Bulldogs and boxer in agreement
30. I am a mosque's leader!
32. Brood left in bazaar
33. Hog eating final bit of gift pack



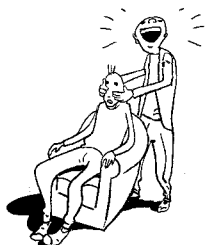
34. Contemptible foundation
35. Turning lid, see large beer mug
36. Evenly distributed name for either gender
37. Picking up check, a Communist made a bow

DOWN

1. Coaches treating talk-show host
2. Vandal with \$1000 is handsome guy
3. Stay in a tent with a Rhode Island liqueur
4. Oaf going around Italy departed (*two words*)
5. Open can plus plastic
6. American author's kitty fine
7. Jones who made designs in one pass
8. Racer walked behind Vietnam War figure (*two words*)
13. Nymph that is back in the clutches of misfit

16. Network running across rare sea urchins
19. Damp items on crackers
21. Love nuts in rice; it's like a dream
22. After cathedral town, tour French palace
23. Run through end of link in underground pipe
25. Regarding medium aged fashion anew
26. Goodness of a store's second row pronounced (*two words*)
27. Out of order, like private dining?
31. A word of wonder for a 1958 Pulitzer winner

Note: The instructions above are for this month's puzzle only. It is assumed that you know how to decipher clues. For a complete introduction to clue-solving send an addressed, stamped long envelope to The Atlantic Puzzler, 77 North Washington Street, Boston, Mass. 02114.



WORD FUGITIVES

by BARBARA WALLRAFF

What's "a word to describe the feeling one experiences when stepping off a curb without knowing it"? This fugitive, sought in the July/August issue, sent readers' minds careening in all directions. *Disurbed* was a very common response. Variants on *vertigo* were popular too—for instance, *curbigo* and *inadvertigo* (each submitted by several people); *vertigone* (from Tom Thomsen, of Magnolia, Texas); *voidigo* (David Nurse, of Yellowknife, Northwest Territories); and *whereditgo* (Rosie Bensen, of Newcastle, Maine). Other ideas included *curbulence* and *stepefaction* (each submitted by more than one person); the *slippery slope fallacy* (Steve Poole, of Seattle); *sole searching* (John Sette, of St. Augustine, Florida); and *stepping short* (Tom Diehl, of Alexandria, New Hampshire). Karl Hanf, of Billerica, Massachusetts, wrote, "It's called *falling*. No fancy, made-up words are necessary. There's one in every crowd."

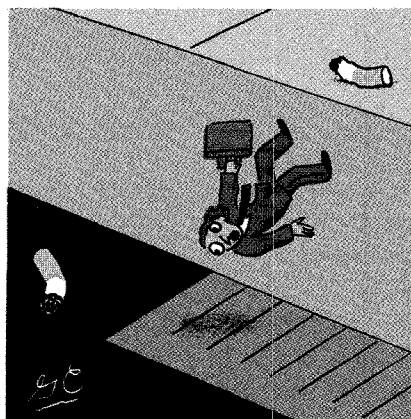
David Chastain, of Boston, wrote: "This is a feeling familiar to anyone who has worked on staging planks, set up high on scaffolding. Over long spans the planks are overlapped at the ends, so that you're never supported by a single cantilevered plank. You step down a small amount as you cross the overlap. If you're carrying a bundle of shingles or something that obscures your view of your path and you're not expecting this little drop, you're suddenly aware that you're high above ground and have lost your footing. It's called a *half-inch heart attack*. Decades of your life can pass before your eyes in this interval." Nick Winowich, of Albuquerque, New Mexico, wrote, "Bricklayers already have a phrase for it," and launched into a similar explanation. But according to Winowich, the phenomenon is called a *two-inch death plunge*.

Rebecca Lasky, of San Francisco, was unable to curb her enthusiasm. She wrote, "I do not feel it *ungrounded* to

say that life throws everyone that *curb fall* at one time or another, though few are *dealighted* (and many strongly *disinclined*) to find themselves rudely *kerbplotted* into the ranks of the *down-trodden*. As for the best word to describe the feeling when one has been so *erroaded*, could it be *discurbobulated*?"

Top honors go to Julie Ruckstuhl, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, who wrote, "Two expressions come immediately to mind: *groundless fear* and *animated suspension*."

In the same issue a reader asked for help in finding a word for quickly clear-



ing the clutter from the front seat of a car to accommodate an unexpected passenger. A number of people suggested *gearshifting*. To explain why this word is apt, one person who proposed it, Steven Safran, of Natick, Massachusetts, wrote, "You're not actually cleaning, merely moving the junk around."

C. Bernard Barfoot, of Alexandria, Virginia, wrote, "When I was in the U.S. Navy, the crew routinely worked to keep our ship neat and clean when we were under way at sea. Every day the order would go out to '*titivate* the ship,' which meant to 'spruce it up or make it neat and orderly.' So there would seem to be ample precedent for adopting *titivation* as the word to describe tidying on the go. The word *titivate* apparently was derived from *tidy* with a quasi-Latin suf-

fix added." The *Oxford English Dictionary* labels that etymology "perh." (that is, perhaps), but its etymologists have no competing explanations to offer.

William Kittredge, of Ocean City, New Jersey, suggested a *clean swoop*; Tina Thompson, of Paducah, Kentucky, *fling cleaning*; Clela Reed, of Athens, Georgia, *hasty putting*; Margaret Chen, of Irvine, California, *hurri-clean*; and Robert Pearson, of Woodland Park, Colorado, *trashportation*. And Steve Meuse, of Londonderry, New Hampshire, wanted us to know that he thinks those particularly skilled at the activity under discussion should be called *litterati*.

And what, indeed, should we call that activity? Top honors go to Jeremy Weiss, of Morris Plains, New Jersey, for his coinage *asweep at the wheel*.

Now NICK FEDOROFF, of Wilmington, North Carolina, asks, "What's the word for that restless feeling that causes me to repeatedly peer into the refrigerator when I'm bored? There's nothing to do in there."

And CARSON STANWOOD, of Jackson Hole, Wyoming, writes, "My wife and I have been searching for a term that describes the manner in which two people who dislike each other manage to avoid acknowledgment, even in close proximity, when their paths cross in public."

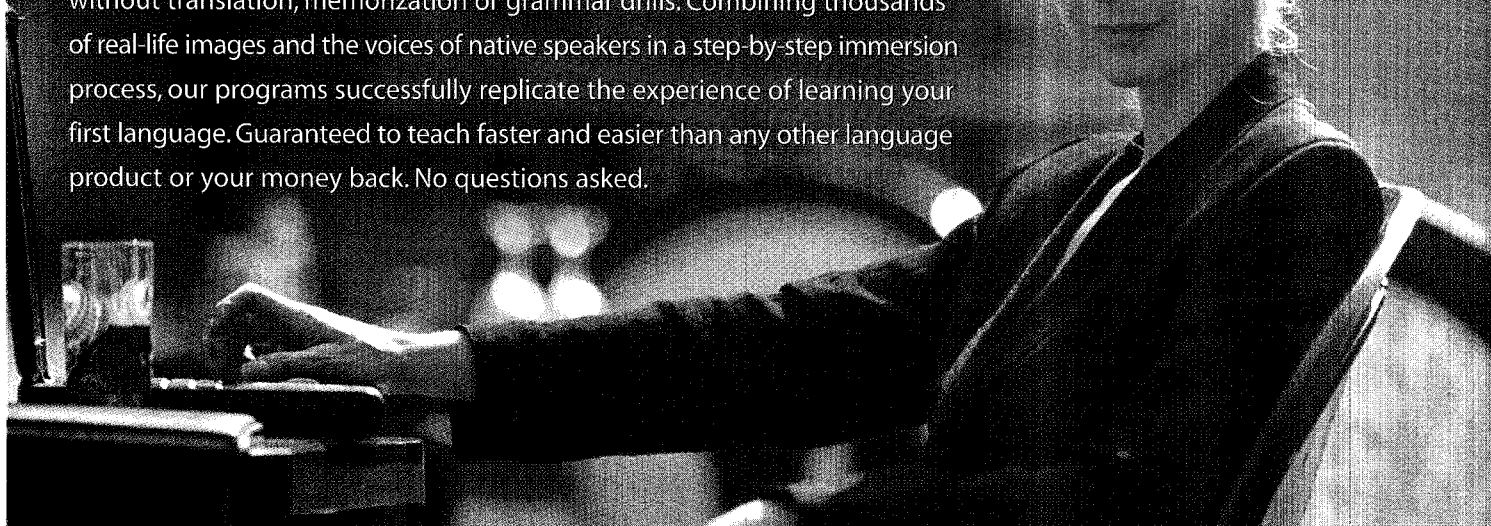
Send words that meet Nick Fedoroff's or Carson Stanwood's needs to *Word Fugitives*, The Atlantic Monthly, 77 North Washington Street, Boston, MA 02114, or visit the *Word Fugitives* page on our Web site, at www.theatlantic.com/fugitives. Submissions must be received by December 31. Use the same addresses to submit word fugitives that you'd like The Atlantic's help in finding. Letters become the property of *Word Fugitives* and may be edited.

Readers whose queries are published and those whose words are singled out for top honors will each receive, with our thanks, a selection of autographed recent books by Atlantic authors. The next installment's correspondents will be sent *Florence of Arabia*, by Christopher Buckley; *The Outlaw Sea*, by William Langewiesche; and *Road Work*, by Mark Bowden.

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The Paladin of Palimony

Marvin Mitchelson (1928–2004)

BY MARK STEYN

Like many implausible characters, he was at home in the fiction of Jackie Collins. In *Hollywood Wives*, one of the women discovers that her husband is having an affair with her best friend, a Miss Karen Lancaster: “She escorted him to the door. ‘Tomorrow I am phoning Marvin Mitchelson,’ she announced grandly. ‘By the time I am finished with you the only milk you’ll be able to afford is from Karen Lancaster’s tits!’”

As withering putdowns go, it doesn’t quite work. But the Mitchelson detail has the ring of authenticity. In real life it was he who did most of the milking—not just of his clients’ unfortunate husbands but of the cases themselves, for every last drop of publicity. His was a faded name by the end, which must have distressed him. But for two decades he was a genuine celebrity—the celebrity who changed the way other celebrities live. He was the lawyer who seized an opportunity in evolving attitudes toward divorce—or, at any rate, celebrity divorce. In the old days Hollywood handled splitsville discreetly: the studios could usually square things with Hedda and Louella, and the discarded spouse got a one-way ticket on the oblivion express. But in Mitchelson’s hands divorce was just part of the show, and he expected his stars to perform. And happily for him, some of his movie-star clients made much better clients than they ever did movie stars. In the oft retailed alimony gags of the period he’s the unseen presence. Zsa Zsa Gabor on her fifth husband: “He taught me housekeeping. When I divorce, I keep the house.”

In fairness, the man who taught Hollywood women housekeeping was Mitchelson, who represented Zsa Zsa in two sevenths of her divorces. He performed the same service for two of Alan Jay Lerner’s eight wives. Lerner wrote many musicals, but there was one plot he liked so much he kept writing it over and over: young unformed woman

taken in hand by older worldly man. That’s the gist of *My Fair Lady* (1956), *Gigi* (1958), and, eventually and inevitably, *Lolita*, *My Love* (1971), which proved to be one reprise too many of “Thank Heaven for Little Girls.” In life Lerner found the happy endings harder to come by. A serial monogamist, he discovered that little girls don’t always grow up in the most delightful way. Sometimes they grow up and grow out of love, and someone gives them Marvin Mitchelson’s phone number.

That’s what the lawyer made his specialty: the Alan Jay Lerner woman, the young unknown taken up by an older, more powerful Hollywood man. Mitchelson represented Mrs. Marlon Brando and Mrs. Bob Dylan. He made his name forty years ago with Hollywood’s first “million-dollar divorce,” representing Pamela Mason against her husband James. A “million-dollar divorce” sounds almost quaint in an age when Britney’s minders make sure she always has the photocopied prenup with GROOM [YOUR NAME HERE] tucked in her purse when she’s out for a cocktail on a Saturday night. But it was big news back then. Mitchelson subpoenaed dozens of witnesses and threatened to reveal in court James Mason’s more recherché sexual exploits. The actor was glad to settle.

Mitchelson’s mother worked hard to see him through law school, and for a while he was a doughty champion of the poor. He was proudest, he said, of winning the right of indigents to legal representation, in a case before the U.S. Supreme Court in 1963. But he had a flair for tabloid publicity, and after the Mason case he chose to be a doughty champion of the prospectively poor: ex-trophy wives. For *Camelot*, Alan Lerner wrote a song called “How to Handle a Woman.” Easier said than done. The real problem is how to handle a woman who gets Marvin Mitchelson to

handle her divorce. Indeed, *How to Handle a Woman* would have made a much better title for Mitchelson’s autobiography than the one he plumped for: *Made in Heaven, Settled in Court*. On a TV special back in the 1970s Bob Hope sang a duet of “How to Handle a Woman” with Richard Burton. “One thing’s for sure,” Hope cracked over the final chord. “We won’t ask Lee Marvin.”

The Marvin case was Mitchelson’s big expansion of his franchise, the one that introduced a new legal concept: “palimony.” Michelle Triola had lived with Lee Marvin in Malibu Beach for seven years without benefit of clergy, but Mitchelson saw no reason why lack of marriage should be an obstacle to a divorce settlement. To back up the innovation, he disdained fusty legal principles and opted for one-liners: palimony was “a commitment with no rings attached.” Not bad. Even better, the California Supreme Court bought it: live-in lovers could sue for financial support. The ruling, Mitchelson declared, was “the biggest setback for show business since John Wilkes Booth.”

It was great news for Mitchelson, less good for his client. Instead of a multimillion-dollar settlement Miss Triola was awarded a crummy hundred grand for “retraining” (in her pre-Marvin days she had been a “singer”) and lost even that on appeal. But as a general rule, regardless of whether his client won the case, the lawyer always emerged with some kind of victory. Lee Marvin was everybody’s all-time great grizzled, squinty tough guy, but he ended his days as a butt for lounge-act divorce gags. Following the same trajectory, Adnan Khashoggi was everybody’s all-time great international man of mystery, the ne plus ultra of shadowy billionaire arms dealers and confidants of the big-time Saudi royals. But then his relationship with his wife Soraya, the daughter of a London waitress, whom he’d married when she was nineteen, hit the rocks. In accordance with Islamic law, Adnan told Soraya “I divorce thee” three times, the third making it final. In accordance with non-Islamic law, Soraya called Mitchelson.

He demanded a settlement of \$2.5 billion, based on the facts that



Khashoggi spent a quarter of a million bucks a day and she was the mother of five of his children. But he also worked the case assiduously through the Fleet Street tabloids: after Khashoggi, Soraya had married and divorced another husband, who was the ex-boyfriend of a daughter she'd had out of wedlock before marrying Khashoggi, and had an affair with Winston Churchill, a prominent MP, grandson of the former Prime Minister, and rumored father of her seventh child. The point wasn't to build a rational case so much as to turn the Khashoggi name into a tabloid joke, which it quickly became. For a while *The Guinness Book of Records* included the case as the world's most expensive settlement: \$950 million. Those in the know said it was up to \$948 million south of that, but whatever the check Khashoggi had to write, it was nothing compared with the damage to his reputation and the permanent diminishment of his status with the House of Saud.

That was the Mitchelson trick. He Zsa Zsa-ed everyone. No matter how cool, refined, or sinister you were, by the time he was through with you, you sounded like a bit part in a Jackie Collins. Only Groucho Marx gave as good as he got. When his third wife, Eden

Hartford, sued for divorce, in part because he'd threatened to kill her, Groucho countered that there was no point giving her the house, because her sloth made her unsuited for housekeeping; that he'd ponied up all the money she'd ever asked for, including a hundred bucks a month for her mother; and that in fact he was giving her an allowance before he even married her. "Since I'm a very bad lay, she was entitled to this," he said in his deposition. Mitchelson got a million dollars for Miss Hartford, but Groucho, like Zsa Zsa, kept the house.

Mitchelson moved with the times. As film stars faded, he turned to rockers. As marriage faded, he pushed palimony. When AIDS arrived, he represented Rock Hudson's under-informed lover. Just as lack of a wedding certificate was no reason to forgo the divorce, so lack of paternity was no reason to forgo the paternity suit. He sued Robert De Niro in behalf of the daughter of an old girlfriend, dismissing as irrelevant DNA tests proving that the actor couldn't be the father. "She loves him," the lawyer said. "She feels he's her dad." No matter what kind of relationship or nonrelationship you had going, you were on the hook to somebody for something.

Because of lawyers like Mitchelson, Hollywood marriage brokers dreamed up the pre-nup—a device he despised.

In court he could reduce you to tears, or worse. "I once reduced a witness to death," he claimed. "He had a heart attack while I was cross-examining him. I did mouth-to-mouth resuscitation in court and thought about giving up law for the rest of the evening." But most of the time Mitchelson just made you feel queasy in a nonfatal way. He was a terrible ham, weeping and wailing, breaking down, cracking up, collapsing in a coughing fit, whatever it took. He had a two-tone Rolls and drove a Merc with the license plate PALIMONY. He paid \$600,000 for the Duchess of Windsor's amethyst-and-turquoise necklace and announced he'd bought it in honor of his mother.

In the 1990s it all caught up with him. A fortune built on the personal failings of others fell victim to his own: he was charged with fraud; his staff said he was addicted to cocaine; two clients accused him of rape; he was convicted of tax evasion, lost his license, and in 1996 went to federal prison, where he ran the law library and helped fellow inmates with their appeals. On his release he was broke, and worked as a paralegal.

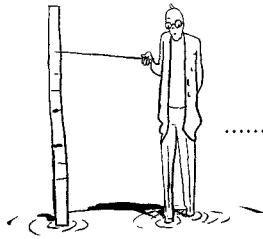
He would have done well from gay marriage, which after just a few months in Ontario has already led to the first gay divorce. Somewhere in Beverly Hills there's a turkey baster lying abandoned in the kitchen drawer of a famous Hollywood single mom for whom he could probably have won a landmark \$10 million settlement. Instead, in the time between the restoration of his license and the onset of his final illness he won one last great settlement: \$216 million for the estranged wife of a minor Saudi royal.

And for all the cocaine, fraud, rape, and tax accusations, there was one mess he managed to avoid. He leaves a widow, Marcella, his wife of forty-five years. ■

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JIM SELBY/REX FEATURES

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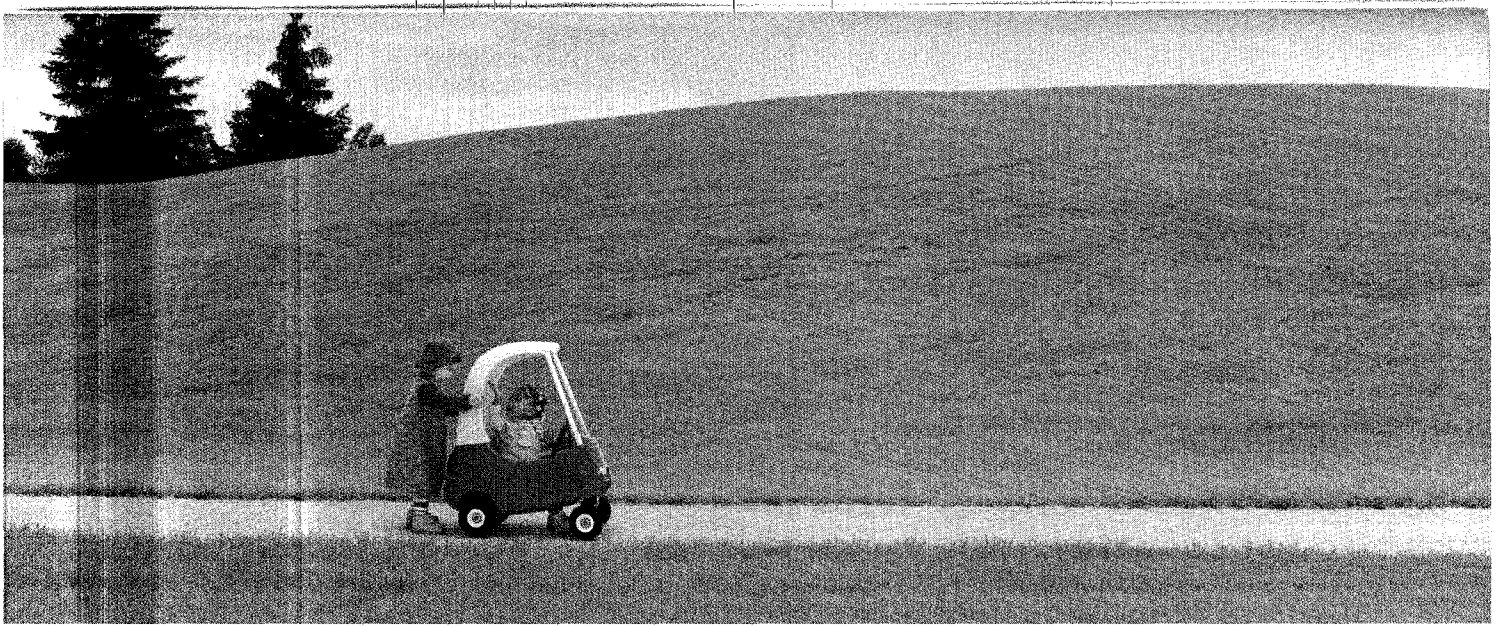


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